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CONVERSION OF THE WEST.

CONVERSION OF THE WEST.

THE CELTS.

BY THE

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WITH TWO MAPS.

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CONVERSION OF THE CELTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE CELTIC MIGRATION.

WHEN the great Roman Empire had well-nigh run its course, and was fast disappearing in an abyss of decrepitude and corruption, new nations, whom the Providence of God long prepared for the hour, had already moved up, ready to take its place.

Sinking minor divergences of race, and regarding them solely in their moral and religious aspects, we may arrange them in three groups—the *Celt*, the *Teuton*, and the *Slave*.

The people included in the first group had indeed already become more or less amalgamated with their Roman conquerors. After leaving their primeval home in Central Asia, they had become known to classical writers by three several names, *Celtæ*, *Galatæ*, and *Galli*.[1] Of these, *Celtæ* is the most ancient, and

[1] Diefenbach's 'Celtica,' ii. p. 6, sq.; Thierry, 'Histoire des Gaulois,' i. p. 28.

is found in the earliest Greek historians,[1] while *Galli* was the Roman name, and probably exhibits the same root as the two other names, omitting the Celtic suffix.[2]

At a very early period the nomad Celts became a terror to the world.

Scaling the mighty barrier of the Alps, they descended upon the fertile vales of Southern Europe. The wave of migration swept onwards, and then parted asunder in two directions.

In the fourth century before Christ, one portion poured over the Italian peninsula, surged against the Cyclopean walls of the Etrurian cities, deluged Rome, and all but obliterated the landmarks of her earlier history. The name of Brennus recalls a well-known scene, when, in spite of the contradictions of her own historians, the young republic was very nearly succumbing before the men of the North, who defeated her armies in the field, and butchered her senators in the capital.

Three or four generations later, B.C. 279, another portion descended into Macedonia and Thessaly, passed into Greece, and for a time carried everything before them, till they were repulsed in the gorges of the sacred Delphi. Thus checked in their onward course, a considerable section passed north-

[1] Herod., ii. 33; iv. 49.

[2] Zeuss, 'Gramm. Celt.,' p. 758.

ward through Thrace, reached the coast of the Hellespont, crossed over to the opposite shores, and overran the greater portion of Asia Minor. Here alternately the scourge and the allies of each Asiatic prince in succession, as passion or interest dictated, they for a time indulged their predatory instincts unchecked, till at length they brought down upon themselves the terrible might of Rome, and were confined by Augustus, B.C. 25, within the limits of the province of "Galatia," "the land of the Gael," the "Galatia" of St. Paul.[1]

Meanwhile, vast bodies had still remained in Central and Southern Europe, and were a continual source of terror to the Roman republic. Her legionaries found them protecting Carthaginian cities in Sicily during the first Punic War, and encountered them in the second on the bloody fields of Thrasymene and Cannæ. After the Punic Wars, the Republic, resolved to rid herself of an abiding cause of apprehension, carried the war beyond the Alps, and

[1] Lightfoot's 'Commentary on the Galatians,' Introd., p. 6. The word *magh*=a *plain* or *field* (Sanskrit *mahí*=terra; Welsh *maes*), is found in more than a hundred Irish names, as *Ar-magh*, *May-nooth*, &c.; in *Rotomagus*, now Rouen, in France; in *Magetoburgum*, now Magdeburg, in Germany. It appears also in the Galatian district in the words *Magydus*, *Magabula*, *Magaba*, *Mygdale*, *Magnesia*, and the *Mygdones*. —Isaac Taylor's 'Words and Places,' p. 155.

making the Greek colony of Massilia, or Marseilles, her vantage-ground, strove to extend her political influence among the various Gallic tribes. But the tremendous conflicts at Pourrières and Vercelli, in which Marius succeeded at greatest hazard in warding off for a time the irruption of the barbaric world, kindled in the breasts of Roman commanders a still sterner resolve to carry the sword amongst the Celtic confederacies, and destroy all chances of peril for the future. Hence, though driven back from the south by the Roman legions, and forced westward by the Teutons, who had followed on their track from the same Aryan home, and confined, like their countrymen in Asia Minor, within narrower and still narrower limits, the Gauls did not succeed in escaping the hostility of Cæsar.

For fourteen years the great Dictator waged war against them without intermission. In these campaigns he won battles on the Jura, among the volcanic passes of Auvergne, in Belgium, and in the Armorican peninsula, led large armies twice to the shores of the Western Ocean, and once across the Rhine, and is said to have sacrificed two millions of men.[1] Then he changed his policy. He favoured Gaul and the Gauls

[1] Sheppard's 'Fall of Rome, and Rise of the New Nationalities,' p. 106.

in every possible way. Even the tribute which he was compelled to levy, he disguised under the honourable appellation of military pay. He enlisted the bravest Gallic warriors under his standard, and they followed him fearlessly over the Alps, and across the Rubicon to the gates of Rome.

What Julius began, Augustus set himself to complete. "The Julian towns had all been built in the interests of Cæsar's party; the Augustan cities had all a political aim."[1] New names, often taken from the names of the old clans, were given to old cities. The country was divided into four provinces, so arranged as to cut across all older distinctions of race. Great roads intersected it, and in the words of Pliny, "Provence became more Italian than Italy herself"; and in the "Imperial Province," as the rest of Gaul was called, civic life began to supplant the old clan feeling."[2]

Meanwhile beyond the ocean the great Britannic leaders continued the struggle for freedom. But Roman conquest, though it might be delayed, could not be averted. Britain, like Gaul, became a part of the great Roman Empire, and the only portions of the Celtic race which retained their independence and social characteristics were the Irish tribes and the

[1] Kitchin's 'History of France,' p. 38. [2] Ibid., p. 39.

hardy Pictish and Caledonian mountaineers. These last poured, time after time, into the debatable land that lay between the walls of Antoninus and Hadrian, and in the end ravaged the whole of Britain as far as London, pursuing the retreating Roman civilization to the very shores of the sea which rolled between them and the coasts of France.

But Britain never became quite Roman, as Gaul did, and Ireland never became Roman at all. These unsubdued Celtic tribes were reserved for a great purpose.

Their forefathers had formed the vanguard of the western portion of the great Aryan migration. They were to form the vanguard in the Missionary history of Europe; and while the Roman world was more and more decaying, and the great Teutonic movement was as yet in its infancy, they were destined to train and send forth some of the earliest and bravest pioneers of Christian civilization in Switzerland and Germany.

CHAPTER II.

CELTIC HEATHENDOM.

BUT before we proceed to treat of the conversion of the Celtic races, it will be well to try and form some idea of their character and of their religion, so far as we can make them out across the ages.

Ancient writers have dwelt frequently on the imposing physical features of the Celts, their great stature, fair complexion, enormous muscular strength, and fondness for personal decoration. "They wear," writes Diodorus Siculus, "bracelets and armlets, and round their necks thick rings, all of gold, and costly finger-rings, and even golden corselets; they have dyed tunics, flowered with colours of every kind, and striped cloaks fastened with a brooch, and divided into numerous many-coloured squares." The 'Commentaries' of Cæsar illustrate his description still more, and give us a vivid idea also of their prowess in battle, and the terrible fierceness of their attacks when well commanded.

Nor did their moral characteristics escape observation. They have been traced with great distinctness.

Roman writers have noticed as the brighter features of their character a singular quickness of apprehension, great promptitude in action, a marvellous impressibility, and an eager craving after knowledge.[1] On the other hand, they have dwelt also on the darker side of the medal. They were fickle, inconstant, and quarrelsome; treacherous in their dealings, incapable of sustained effort, easily disheartened by failure, ready at all times to waste their strength, which might have been very great, had they been united, on petty factions and private feuds.

The social tie, which held Celtic society together, was rather personal than civil. "The Gaul," it has been remarked, "devoted himself to the service of his chieftain, whether as a serf, a client, or a friend; the chieftains dwelt apart, and issued forth to war or councils attended by a retinue of dependents, of whom they exacted a sort of feudal service in return for their maintenance."[2]

The political education of the Gauls was highly advanced; their laws and institutions were definitively settled; their kings and nobles generally acting for the commonalty made war or peace, and formed leagues and alliances among themselves. They

[1] Comp. Cæsar, 'Bell. Gall.,' ii. 1; iii. 10; iv. 5; Tac. 'Germ.,' 29.

[2] Merivale's 'Romans under the Empire,' i. 227.

planted various fortified towns, and many large but open villages, cultivated their lands, and engaged in commerce and some kinds of manufacture. In the time of Cæsar they had already attained to the highest pitch of civilization of which their race is perhaps capable, and had begun, it would appear, to decline and degenerate to a lower level. Their private vices, especially intemperance,[1] were notorious and shocking even to their luxurious conquerors, nor did they evince much public spirit in the course of the contest they for a time maintained with them, from which, when once beaten, they never again rallied.

During his long campaigns Cæsar had many opportunities of noticing the main features of Celtic religious belief and religious worship, and he has not failed to describe the impression they made upon him.

But to prevent mistake, we must be careful to distinguish between the Celtic system as it was in his days and as we shall find it at a later period, when confronted by the zeal of Christian missionaries.

(i.) We will speak of it first in its earlier stage, and as described by classical writers.

The original character of Druidism was essentially Oriental, and corresponded in many important particulars with the simple and spiritual character[2] of the

[1] Ammian. Marc., xv. 12; Diod. Sic., v. 26.

[2] Merivale's 'Romans under the Empire,' i. 230.

Persian theosophy, teaching the purity of the godhead as a metaphysical abstraction, and the eternity of the soul's existence by transmigration.

But side by side with Oriental theism appeared in process of time an element-worship, which identified the objects of nature with the memory of deceased heroes, and worshipped the sun and stars, the thunder and the storm, as the visible representatives of superior beings.

Hence, the Roman commander thought he could discern a likeness between the objects of Celtic worship and the host of Olympus.[1] Thus in Teutates he recognised Mercurius; in Belenus[2] he saw a likeness to Apollo; he identified Taranis[3] with the thundering Jupiter; while the god whom he calls Mars was probably Esus or Hesus.[4] As the Minerva he mentions was not a Grecian, but an Etruscan and Roman goddess, her worship amongst the Celts may have been of the same character as in those countries, and she has been identified with a goddess Belisana, whose name has been found on an inscription.[5]

[1] Cæsar, 'Bell. Gall.,' vi. 17.

[2] Comp. the old name Apello, Apellen. Βέλα was also the Spartan name for the Sun.

[3] "Taran" is Celtic for thunder. See Moberly on Cæsar, 'B. G.,' vi. 17.

[4] Comp. Lucan, i. 445, sq.: the name is supposed to linger in *Hesary Tor*, in Devonshire; see Isaac Taylor, p. 220.

[5] Martin's 'Relig. des Gaulois,' i. 504.

The priestly body, the powerful order of the Druids, occupied amongst the Celtic nations a position similar to that of the same body in Egypt.

At its head, and supreme over all the grades into which it was divided, was a high-priest,[1] whose dignity lasted for life, and whose election was sometimes decided by wager of battle. The Druids were at once the ministers of a theocracy and the judges and legislators of the people. They enjoyed an immunity from service in the army, and from the obligation to pay taxes. Their yearly convention was held in the district of the Carnutes, north of the Loire, probably at Dreux,[2] and the contending factions of the whole country appeared there to adjust their differences, and any one whom they excommunicated, or excluded from the sacrifices, was avoided by all and stripped of his honours and rights.

The Druids formed an exclusive corporation, and only imparted their secret doctrines to their disciples after a long period of training and probation.[3] The instruction they gave included mathematics, astronomy, natural science and ethics. But it was perpetuated amongst themselves only by the use of

[1] Cæsar, 'Bell. Gall.,' vi. 14.

[2] Legends connected with the cathedral of Chartres tend to show that this place was selected for a centre of Christian missions from its reputed sanctity with the Druids.—Merivale, i. 230.

[3] Cæsar, 'Bell. Gall.,' vi. 13, 14; Mela, iii. 2.

Greek letters, and was communicated to others by oral tradition.

Besides the Druids, there were colleges also of priestesses, some of whom were married, while others abstained from wedlock. They had special sanctuaries, could alone perform certain sacrifices, and possessed very considerable influence. Thus on the island of Sena, now Sein, off the western promontory of Armorica, was a community of nine maidens, who had the care of an oracle, and were supposed to be able to raise storms by their verses, change themselves into beasts, heal diseases, and foretell the future.[1] A similar community amongst the tribe of the Nannetes inhabited a little island at the mouth of the Loire, which the foot of no male was allowed to approach.[2]

In a wider signification of the term, the Druidic order included the Ouadd, or Ovate, the sacrificing priest or augur, and the Bards or "Glee-men," who kept alive in the memories of the people the exploits of national heroes, and animated them to martial daring.[3]

The claim of the Druidic order to be able to extort the secrets of futurity from reluctant powers, to

[1] Mela, iii. 6. [2] Strabo, iv. p. 190.

[3] How influential this order was even in the days of Columba may be seen below, p. 113.

expiate guilt, to secure victory, to release from sickness, or avert anticipated danger, will account for the human sacrifices, which were exceedingly numerous, and which made a great impression on the conqueror of Gaul. According to the Druid doctrine, the deity would not be satisfied for the life of one man without the death of another, and preferred a human sacrifice to any other. Sometimes the victim was struck with the sword from behind, and the will of the deity was read in the manner of his falling headlong, from the convulsion of his limbs, the gushing of his blood. Sometimes he was bound to a stake in the middle of a temple, and there put to death with arrows or javelins. Sometimes gigantic baskets of wicker-work, in human form, were filled with victims and then set on fire.[1] If it was a public or state sacrifice, the victims were criminals, who would otherwise have been executed, and who were often kept several years for this purpose. If no criminals were forthcoming, men were bought and fed, and taken forth in procession on the day appointed for the solemnity and put to death.[2] Some even voluntarily came forward to share the pile with an honoured person deceased, or to immolate themselves in be-

[1] Cæsar, 'Bell. Gall.,' vi. 16.

[2] Compare the account of the human sacrifices in Mexico, in Prescott's 'Conquest of Peru.'

half of a sick friend.[1] The Roman government did its best rigorously to suppress these sacrifices, but the custom long continued of scratching the skin of the person devoted, and offering the blood to the offended deity.

The parasitic mistletoe was regarded by the Druids as a gift from heaven, and was supposed to be an infallible remedy against barrenness and poison. Solemn ceremonies marked the gathering of the plant. It could only be severed with a golden sickle, and two milk-white cattle must be sacrificed on the occasion. Similar respect was paid to the anguinium, a petrifaction or echinite, said to have been formed at first by a great number of serpents twined together, or to be the egg of a snake.[2] The possession of such an egg was regarded as a sure way of winning a cause or a trial, and in the reign of the Emperor Claudius, the great enemy of the Druids, a Roman knight from the territory of the Vocontii was put to death for carrying one about his person.

It is plain that such a system so organized and so

[1] Mela, iii. 2. "Natio est omnis Gallorum admodum dedita religionibus."—Cæsar, 'Bell. Gall.,' vi. 16. Still, it is to be remembered that the Romans themselves buried two Gauls alive in the Roman forum during the second Punic War, to avert an omen (Livy, xxii. 57); and the practice was not so uncommon as is supposed.

[2] Pliny, 'N. H.,' iii. 12; xvi. 44.

influential could not be endured in competition with Roman manners and religion.

The great aim, therefore, of Roman policy was, by the development of numerous Italian colonies, to assimilate and absorb the Celtic rite; and "this fusion was the easier, as, in the thorough victory of the Romans, the Roman gods had proved themselves the true potentates and wielders of earthly destinies; while those of the Gauls had surrendered their worshippers, or proved too weak to protect them."[1]

But the Imperial *régime* demanded the complete downfall of the Druid hierarchy.

Augustus forbade the exercise of Druidical rites in Rome, but did not venture to prohibit the natives of the Transalpine provinces from celebrating their national ritual. Tiberius, alarmed by the revolt of the Æduans and of Sacrovir, who was, probably, himself a Druid, gave a still sharper expression to his hostility. Claudius resolved on the entire abolition of the order, and carried out with relentless severity the edict of proscription. Proscribed in Gaul, proscribed in Britain, Druidism retired to the sacred recesses of the little island of Mona, surrounded by boiling tides, and clothed with impenetrable thickets. "In this gloomy lair, secure, apparently, though shorn

[1] Döllinger, i. 113.

of might and dignity, they still persisted in the practice of their unholy superstition. They strove, perhaps, like the trembling priests of Mexico, to appease the gods, who seemed to avert their faces, with more horrid sacrifices than ever."[1]

But even to this last retreat the relentless legionaries pursued the votaries of an expiring faith. The sacred island itself was covered with Roman intrenchments. The dense array of the Britons in front, the furious Druids behind, were cut down in a common massacre, and the blazing groves witnessed the abolition of a time-honoured superstition.[2]

From this moment the Druidism of classical writers disappears from the page of history.

(ii.) The form of it which encounters us in the biographies of the early missionaries of a purer faith is of a very different type. The massacres in the forests of Mona did their work. The Druidic hierarchy was broken up, and but a faint echo survived of a once all-potent creed.

Element-worship survived, though in a simpler form. Highest in the Celtic Pantheon was the golden-handed sun,[3] dispensing, as the lord of heaven, his

[1] Merivale's 'Romans under the Empire,' vi. p. 249.

[2] Tac. 'Ann.,' xiv. 30.

[3] Comp. the 'Confession' of St. Patrick. On the connection between the Celtic Bel or Belen and the Syrian Baal, see Isaac

gifts of radiance and fertility, and sharing the devotion of his worshippers with the moon and stars, with genii of the hill and the valley, of the grove and the spring.

In Ireland we read of idols also as objects of worship, and the greatest of these, the image of Crom-Cruach,[1] stood on the plain of Magh Sleacht, "the Plain of Adoration," with its twelve brazen subordinate images, till its destruction by the great missionary.

But of such the records are few and scanty. We trace more clearly evidence of a belief in shadowy mysterious beings called *Saide* or *Saidhe*, who were supposed to haunt the sea and the river, the mountain and the vale.

Thus the ancient metrical life of St. Patrick says of him :—

"He preached threescore years
The Cross of Christ to the *Tuatha*[2] of Feni.
On the *Tuatha* of Erin there was darkness.
The Tuatha adored the *Sidhe.*

Taylor's 'Words and Places,' p. 220. "To the Celtic deity we may probably assign *Belan*, near Trefeglwys in Montgomeryshire, *Belan* near Newtown, and two *Belan Banks* in Shropshire, and the *Baal Hills* in Yorkshire."

[1] See Todd's 'Life of St. Patrick,' p. 128.

[2] Tuath denotes a territory and a tribe, as well as the people generally.

They believed not the true Godhead
Of the true Trinity."[1]

Again, a mythical monarch of Ireland is stated, in the 'Book of Conquests,' to have received as pledges from the nation, "sun and moon, and every power which is in heaven and in earth," that the sovereignty should be for ever allowed in his family. Moreover, in an ancient tract, contained in the '*Leabhar na h-Uidhri*,' we are told that before the introduction of the Christian Faith the demons in human bodies "used to tempt the people, and they used to show them secrets and places of happiness, where they should be immortal. And it is these phantoms that the unlearned people call *Sidhe* and *Aes Sidhe*."[2]

The old Druidic hierarchy still survived, though in a humble form, in the persons of the *Druadh*, or, as they are constantly termed in Celtic hagiology, *Magi*.

The word sufficiently attests the power they were supposed to wield. They could conciliate these mysterious genii. They could practise incantations, and work spells, and exercise a very potent influence over those who dared to oppose them.

Thus, in the 'Book of Armagh' the monarch of

[1] See Skene's 'Celtic Scotland,' ii. p. 108.

[2] Petrie's 'Hist. Acc. of Tara Hill,' quoted in Skene, i. 110.

Ireland is represented, on the arrival of St. Patrick, as having in his service his soothsayers and *magicians*, his augurs and diviners. Again, his Magus challenges St. Patrick to "perform signs" to show their respective powers, and in the presence of all commences his magical incantations, and brings down snow upon the whole plain.[1] In the Book of Leinster we find Dathi, the successor of Niall of the Nine Hostages, asking the Druids to ascertain for him, by their arts, the events that were to happen to him during the ensuing year; and Cormac employs the Druids, like the medicine-men of the North-American tribes, to deprive the men of Munster and their cattle of water.[2]

In complete harmony with these notions are the indications afforded by the biographers of the Celtic missionaries amongst the Picts of Scotland.

Thus, in a poem ascribed to Columba, he says:—

"It is not with the *sreod*[3] our destiny is,
Nor with the bird on the top of the twig,
Nor with the trunk of a knotty tree,
Nor with a *sordan* hand in hand."[4]

[1] Betham's 'Ant. Res.' ii. App. p. v.

[2] O'Curry's 'Lecture on the MS. Materials of Ancient Irish History,' p. 271.

[3] Dr. Todd's translates "sreod" by "sneezing."

[4] Or, as Dr. Todd renders the line,—

"Nor with the noise of clapping of hands."

And again :—

"I adore not the voice of the birds,
Nor the *sreod*, nor a destiny on the earthly world,
Nor a son, nor chance, nor woman ;
My *Drui* is Christ the Son of God."

We are told that on another occasion Columba had been tarrying some days in the province of the Picts, and converted a certain peasant with his whole family through the preaching of the Word of Life, and that the husband, together with his wife and children and servants, was baptized. A few days afterwards, one of his sons was attacked by a dangerous illness, and brought to the point of death. On this the "Magi," or *Druadh*, began with great bitterness to upbraid the parents, and to extol their own god as more powerful than the God of the Christians.[1]

Again, we read that once when Columba was staying among the Picts, he heard that there was a fountain famous amongst the heathen people, which in their folly they worshipped as a god. Those who drank of this fountain, or wilfully washed their hands or feet in it, were struck, it was believed, either with leprosy or blindness, or some kind of infirmity. Thereupon Columba advanced towards the fountain, and solemnly blessed it in the name of Christ, and

[1] Adamnan's 'Life,' ii. 33.

drank of the water, together with his companions, and washed his hands and feet in it. From that day forward the evil genii were believed to have departed from the fountain, and the people, instead of being injured by its water, were healed of various diseases.[1]

Once more, Columba one day was at the court of King Brude, and was on the point of making a voyage along Loch Ness. This Broichan, the Magus of the king, declared he would prevent, saying, "I can make the winds unfavourable to thy voyage, and I can cause a great darkness to envelop thee in its shade." Undeterred by his threats, the saint proceeded towards the lake with a large number of followers. Presently it became very dark, and a strong wind arose and lashed the lake into foaming billows. Broichan and his party began to exult. But Columba called on Christ, his Lord, and set sail fearlessly in a small boat, which bore him whither he wished in spite of the fury of the gale.[2]

These notices are sufficient to give us some idea of the religious beliefs of the Celtic tribes in the last refuge of their island homes, hidden away amidst the Northern seas.

Already in the time of Cæsar, Druidism had de-

[1] Adamnan, ii. 10. [2] Adamnan, ii. 35.

generated from the purer form which once distinguished it. Here we see it at its latest stage, before it gradually passed away.

Speaking generally, it consisted of two great factors,—nature-worship, including the adoration of fountains and streams, and spirit-worship, which peopled all the objects of nature with malignant beings, to whose agency its phenomena were attributed; while the *Magi*, or *Druadh*, exerted a great influence over the people, under the belief that they could by magic or witchcraft benefit those who sought their aid, or injure those who opposed their commands.

CHAPTER III.

THE EARLY CELTIC CHURCHES OF GAUL.

THE earliest Celtic Church ever recorded to have been founded, was that of Galatia, in Asia Minor.

But the population out of which it was formed included members of many races. Besides the Celtic element, there were the original inhabitants of the country, chiefly Phrygian; there were Greek settlers, Roman officials, and Jewish traders. But with all this foreign admixture, it has been remarked that "it was the Celtic blood which gave its distinctive colour to the Galatian character, and which separated them by so broad a line from their neighbours, the Christian converts of Colossæ, though educated in the same Phrygian worship, and subjected to the same Jewish influences. The tough vitality of the Celtic character maintained itself in Asia comparatively unimpaired among Phrygians and Greeks, as it has alone in our own islands among Saxons, and Danes, and Normans, retaining its individuality after the lapse of ages, and under conditions the most adverse."[1]

[1] Canon Lightfoot 'On the Epistle to the Galatians,' Introd., p. 12.

Similarly mixed was the population out of which the earliest Celtic Churches of Western Europe were formed. Even in Gaul itself they were not solely composed of the fierce hardy race with which Rome had so long grappled in a struggle of life and death. Roman customs, Roman dress, Roman language everywhere prevailed. A mixed population of Greeks and Romans, Jews and Celts, inhabited cities whose Latin names seemed designed to obliterate, if possible, even the recollection of the races over which Cæsar had triumphed.

Who can trace the circumstances that led to the planting the earliest Celtic Churches in Gaul? Who first sowed the seed there which afterwards grew up into a great tree?

From the earliest times there was a remarkable connection between Gaul and Asia Minor. Six hundred years before our era the inhabitants of the Ionian town of Phocæa showed their countrymen the way to Western shores, and founded the colony of Massilia. To Gaul, in later times, the two Herods, Archelaus and Antipas, were successively banished, and thither Pontius Pilate also was exiled after his recall from Syria.[1] It is natural to suppose that the banished sovereigns did not go unaccompanied by Jewish attendants. In their wake a Jewish settle-

[1] Milman's 'History of Christianity,' ii. 144.

ment may have followed, attracted by commercial enterprise, to the port of Marseilles, and so to Vienne and Lyons.

Thus the story of the foundation of the Galatian Church may have repeated itself in the West. True, the scantiest details are left to guide us, but in all probability the conclusion is a right one, that converts from Phrygia and Asia Minor propagated the faith in the Jewish settlements that had been formed along the curving shores of Provence and Narbonne, and Celtic hearts were found as open to the message of the Cross in the West as they had been in the East.

The "Galatia" to which St. Paul tells Timothy,[1] in his second epistle, he had sent Crescens, has by some been interpreted as denoting Western Gaul, and it is not improbable that the journey to the furthest bounds of the West, which Clement of Rome describes the apostle himself as taking, may have included a visit to that region.[2] Whether this was so or not, the names of two Greek Asiatics have come down to us, about whom we can have no doubt, as having left their native homes to build up the infant Churches that had been planted in Gaul.

[1] 2 Tim. iv. 10; Lightfoot, 'Introd. to the Galatians,' p. 31.

[2] See Canon Lightfoot on the First Epistle of Clement, ch. v.

Of these the first was Pothinus, a friend of Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, and probably a pupil of St. John. He became bishop of Lugdunum, or Lyons, which merchants from Asia Minor had founded as an emporium of commerce. His hearers appear to have been almost entirely Greek-speaking.

The second was a young priest who joined him, Irenæus. He was a native of Smyrna, or some neighbouring place, and his name, "the Peaceful One," was probably chosen for him by Christian parents at his baptism. Born between A.D. 120 and A.D. 140, he had been instructed in early youth by St. Polycarp, and by his advice had studied, not merely the general outlines of the Christian faith, but the different systems of heathen philosophy, and the varieties of pagan mythology.

He was thus fitted for the refutation of the errors of the Celtic population, amongst whom he had been called to labour. To them, and not merely to the cultivated Greek and Roman society of Lugdunum, he resolved to address himself. For this purpose, he tells us, he set himself to master the many difficulties of the Celtic tongue, and in time, by perseverance, was enabled to use its uncouth and somewhat harsh sounds as easily as his own soft native Greek.

Quietly and peacefully the Gallic Churches maintained their communion one with another and with

their common Lord, and we may be allowed to believe that the pains Irenæus had taken in mastering their own language, told much upon the warm-hearted Celts, and enabled many to stand firm in the fiery trial that came upon them in the year A.D. 177, in the reign of the philosophic emperor Marcus Aurelius.

Truly, the constancy of the Churches of Vienne and Lyons was then put to the severest test, and it was not found wanting.

Who can read unmoved the letter addressed by the members of these Churches to their brethren in Asia Minor, telling how the storm of persecution burst upon them,[1] how the heathen rose against them, hooted and reviled them in the streets, pillaged their houses, and dragged forth the inmates to prison? Whose heart has not beat high, when he heard of the fortitude of Sanctus and Attalus, and of the venerable Bishop Pothinus, dragged with brutal violence before the judgment-seat, beaten, buffeted, thrust into a loathsome dungeon, and when asked "Who is the God of the Christians?" replying with dignity, "If thou art worthy, thou shalt know."

But Gaul was destined to give a still more signal proof of the change that was coming over the world, that in Christ there was "neither male nor female, neither bond nor free." One of the most eminent of

[1] Eusebii 'Ecc. Hist.,' v. 1.

her martyrs at this time was Blandina, a woman, and a slave. Her mistress, a Christian herself, fully expected that she would give way. But such was the grace given to her, that, though racked till even the baffled torturers grew weary of their dreadful work, she seemed to feel none of the anguish that was inflicted on her, and persisted in crying out, "I am a Christian, and there is no evil done among us." Released from her tormentors, she was committed to prison, and for fifteen days was brought out to witness the fearful sufferings of the rest of the Christians. At length, with her brother Ponticus, a boy of fifteen, she was brought into the arena. Every kind of torture was inflicted upon them, but nothing availed to make them invoke the gods. Ponticus, after enduring nobly every kind of agony amidst the encouragements of his sister, gave up the ghost; while Blandina, after she had suffered stripes, the tearing of the breasts, and the iron chair, was tossed by a bull, and still alive, was at last killed by the confector, and so breathed out her soul, while even her enemies confessed that never had woman endured such sufferings.

For six days a guard was set over the bodies, and neither bribes nor entreaties sufficed to obtain their burial. In the end they were burnt, and their ashes were flung into the Rhone, in the hope that they might be deprived of all share in the resurrection.

Eusebius, who wrote at a much later period, has recorded the heroic bearing of two friends, belonging to the same town of Lyons, Epipodius and Alexander; and Bishop Gregory of Tours tells us of two who suffered in the same persecution at Autun. Thither, according to his statement, a disciple of Polycarp, named Benignus, had brought the message of the Gospel, and amongst his converts was Symphorian, the son of a Gallo-Roman noble. As in Galatia, so at Autun, the worship of Cybele was celebrated with great fervour, and year by year her car was led in procession through the city, bearing her tower-crowned image, while her votaries with drum and cymbals danced round her chariot.[1] Symphorian, it was noticed, made no obeisance to the image as it passed. Thereupon he was seized and dragged before the tribunal of the governor, but nothing would induce him to cast incense upon the altar of the goddess, and he was led forth outside the city to die. As the procession of soldiers and lictors passed along, there arose a cry from the walls, "My son." Men looked up and beheld the mother of the martyr, not giving

[1] "The worship of Cybele with its wild ceremonial and hideous mutilations would naturally be attractive to the Gaulish mind. Its external rites were similar enough in their general character to those of the primitive Celtic religion, to commend it to a people who had found satisfaction in the latter."—Lightfoot 'On the Galatians,' Introd., pp. 16, 17.

way to passionate lamentation, but encouraging her son to bear the worst. "My son, Symphorian," she said, "remember the living God. Lift up thine heart and look to Him. He reigns in the heavens. Be not afraid; it is not thy life they will take away this day. They will only change it for a better." With these words of his lone mother ringing in his ears, the youth went to the place of execution, the sword fell flashing down, and soon all was over.

Few things more distinguished the sufferers of Vienne and Lyons than their humility. They declined the appellation of "martyr" or witness altogether. "Only He," said they, "is the faithful and true witness, even the Firstborn from the dead; we are but mean and humble confessors." No wonder it was found impossible to triumph over such lowly trust in an invisible but living Lord. From the "provinces" the Gospel gradually spread inland. Small communities were formed at Autun, Dijon, Besançon, and elsewhere. The progress made was slow, but it was sure. We find twelve bishops present at a provincial synod at Lugdunum, and thirteen at another held at the same place.[1] Thus the movement held its own and advanced.

Still more signal progress marks the year A.D. 244, in

[1] Wiltsch's 'Geography and Statistics of the Church,' i. p. 43.

the reign of the emperor Philip, when Fabian, bishop of Rome, sent seven missionary bishops into Gaul. We are told that they would not enter the country through Marseilles, because it still obstinately adhered to the old pagan worship. So landing at Narbo, they made their way inland, and before long Limoges and Tours became centres of the Gospel; while seven years later Dionysius with eleven brethren settled at Lutetia, Paris, and founded the Church of Northern France.[1]

From this time the spread of the Church was rapid, and we find mention made of martyrs at Tournay about A.D. 277, at Colonia Agrippina about A.D. 297, at Soissons, Nantes, Beauvais, Agde, about the year A.D. 303.

We are now approaching an important era. "The final struggle between Christendom and classical paganism was, in reality, fought out on Gallic soil." The strength of Christianity in the land which had been moistened with the blood of the martyrs of Vienne and Lyons made Constantine declare himself a Christian.

Born in the West, and preferring the West even to Rome itself, Constantine was on his march from

[1] Comp. Severus, 'Chron.' ii.32; Gregorii 'Hist. Franc.,' cap. xxviii. To him the church of St. Denys was afterwards dedicated.

Gaul in the year A.D. 312 to the decisive conflict with Maxentius. He knew that his rival was seeking the aid of magic for the coming struggle,[1] and he remembered the miserable ends of persecuting princes, and the prosperity which had attended his father. He resolved to forsake idols, and prayed to the one Supreme God, whom Constantius had worshipped. One day, while thus musing, he conceived he beheld in the heavens, surmounting and outshining the noonday sun, a figure of the Cross, with the legend "By this conquer." The exact date and place of the event vary in the different accounts. Several spots in Gaul are identified with it. Whence, and wherever it was, the issue was decisive.

Constantine caused the sacred symbol to be blazoned on the standard called *Labarum*, and the Gauls flocked to him, eager to fight under the new banner, and in A.D. 312 the new emperor and Christianity entered Rome in triumph.

But Gaul bore a prominent part in another important development, which was destined to exert the most powerful influence in the gradual evangelization of the Celtic races.

Already, in the middle of the third century, when the Decian persecution drove many Christians into the wilderness, a step had been taken towards the

[1] Eusebius, 'Vita Constant.,' i. 21, 36.

adoption of the monastic system. But their seclusion was only temporary, and they kept up intercourse with their families and Churches. The next stage, the life of the professed anchorite or hermit, assumed its marked form first of all in Egypt with St. Anthony and St. Paul of Thebes.

From the East the movement travelled westward. The first sight, indeed, of the quaint garb of the Egyptian monks in the train of the great Athanasius, when as an exile he visited Rome in A.D. 341, found little favour with the Roman citizens. But very soon the Paulas and Marcellinas of the capital of the West caught the spirit of their sisters of the East, and instead of the vestal virgins, Rome had now convents of nuns. From Rome the system spread over Italy and the islands and rocky islets of the Mediterranean, and before long the peaceful retreats of Nitria and Mesopotamia were reproduced in the recesses of the Apennines and the Sierras of Spain.

In Gaul Celtic enthusiasm welcomed monasticism with singular ardour. "Exiled to Trèves by Constantine in A. D. 336," remarks Montalembert,[1] "Athanasius inspired all the clergy of Gaul at once with his ardour for the Nicene faith, and for the noble life of the solitaries of the Thebaid." But while in Eastern Christendom, after at first doing a

[1] 'Monks of the West,' i. p. 452.

good work in the cause of Missions, penetrating into Phœnicia on the one side, and beyond the Euphrates on the other, monasticism had degenerated into mere solitude, contemplation, and speculation, in the West it meant active life, physical and intellectual. It not only by its very existence protested against ignorance, slavery, and irreligion, but occupied itself with agriculture and other forms of labour, with literature and education.

In Gaul the more fervent Oriental monachism had its chief representative in St. Martin, bishop of Tours, whose influence was very great in the Celtic field of missions.

He was born in Pannonia, about the year A.D. 316. His father, a heathen, was a tribune in the imperial army, and as the son of a veteran, the young man was obliged to serve in the army under the emperors Constantine and Julian. But at an early age he became a catechumen, and having been baptized, attached himself to Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, who conferred minor orders upon him. His first essay in the monastic life was made, it would seem, at Milan; afterwards he retired to the most desert island of Gallinaria, in sight of the coast of Genoa. About the year A.D. 360, he returned with Hilary, who had been restored from exile, to Poitiers, and at the instigation of the prelate founded, near the gates of

the town, the monastery of Ligugé, which has been considered by some to have been the most ancient in Gaul.

Before long the unanimous voice of the people of Tours called him, sorely against his wish, to the episcopate of that city. But though elected, he maintained the monastic life at the head of a new monastery of eighty monks on the opposite side of the Loire. Marmoutier, "the monastery of Martin," or the great monastery, "was then a kind of desert between the right bank of the Loire and the scarped rocks which overlook the course of the stream."[1] It could only be entered by a very narrow path. The bishop himself occupied a cell made of interlaced branches. The eighty monks dwelt for the most part in holes hollowed in the rock, and were clad only in rough skins. Among them there were not a few nobles of the Gallic tribes,[2] who were afterwards, like Martin, drawn forth from their retreat to be advanced to the episcopate against their will.

Their chief possessed little education, but great natural eloquence, unwearied activity, and fervid zeal. In him Celtic heathenism found an unsparing foe. Attended by his monastic brethren, he went

[1] Montalembert, i. 460.

[2] Sulpicii Severi 'Vita,' c. x.

over the country, casting down the Druidical monuments consecrated by the ancient worship, and at the same time the temples and statues of the Roman gods. Once a soldier himself, he reproduced the sternness of the legionaries in opposing the Druidic rites.

But the effort was not unattended with danger. His biographer relates once and again how the rural population rose in defence of their altars and venerated oaks,[1] and threatened the life of the intruder. But he braved their opposition without quailing, and in his combined functions of abbot and bishop devoted himself to the work of proclaiming the faith, and by his devoted labours well deserved the title of the "Apostle of Gaul."

Thus employed he reached the age of eighty, and longed for his release. But the tears and entreaties of his disciples induced him to pray that, if it was the will of God, his days might be prolonged. "Lord," he prayed, "if I am still needed for Thy people, I would not draw back from the work." "*Non recuso laborem.*"

But the Divine Will decided otherwise. He died, and we are told that upwards of ten thousand of his monastic brethren followed him to his grave, about A.D. 400. No hero of the Middle Ages became so

[1] Sulpicii 'Vita,' c. xiii.

universally popular as St. Martin of Tours. Churches without number, monasteries, nay, entire towns, were dedicated to his honour. The oldest church in England is the well-known St. Martin's at Canterbury. The earliest missionary bishop in Southern Scotland, on his way from Rome to Britain, became acquainted with and was profoundly impressed by the great missionary bishop of Gaul,[1] and hallowed in his memory the "White House," Candida Casa, on the promontory now called Whithern. Before long no Celtic missionary from Ireland or Scotland thought of commencing his work in Frisia or Thuringia before he had first visited the shrine of the saint whose dying words had been "*Non recuso laborem.*"

Thus the first great missionary centre was opened in Western Gaul; but it was not long before a second was opened in the South. Ten years after the death of St. Martin, a Roman patrician, named Honoratus, landed on the rocks of a small pine-clad island, visible from the roadstead of Toulon, called Lerins, where once stood the city of Lerinæ, but which, in the time of Pliny, A.D. 70, had fallen into ruins. Honoratus was seeking for himself monastic seclusion, and he discovered on the island a few monks, of whom, speedily increased by others who joined them, he formed an establishment, which speedily transformed

[1] Bede, 'H. E.,' iii. 4.

the face of the islet from a wilderness into a garden with thick plantations and rich meadows.[1] Here, in time, he opened a seminary, which became distinguished at once as a missionary college and a shrine of learning.

Two of the brotherhood[2] have commemorated not only the talents of Honoratus, but his overflowing tenderness towards the family of monastic missionaries, whom he had gathered on the island. He watched incessantly over every detail of their training, their sleep, their food, their studies. He solaced their griefs, tempered their joys, inspired them with hope in the hour of disappointment, and when they went forth on their arduous missions he wrote on waxen tablets letters to encourage them to perseverance and constancy.[3]

Under such a leader it is no wonder that the School of Lerins became famous at once for the knowledge it imparted, and for the men whom it sent forth. Thence came Hilary of Arles, who is recorded to have gone through his diocese always on foot, and barefooted even in the snow. Thence came Vincentius Lerinensis, the originator of the celebrated orthodox interpretation; "*Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est.*" Thence came Lupus of Troyes, who

[1] S. Hilarii 'Vita S. Honorati.'
[2] S. Hilary of Arles and S. Zaccheus.
[3] See S. Eucherus, 'De Laude Erem.'

demanded of Attila "Who art thou?" and received the well-known response, "*I am Attila, the scourge of God.*" Thence came Cæsarius of Arles, for nearly half a century the most illustrious and the most influential of the prelates of Southern Gaul. Thence came Salvian, the most eloquent of his day since Augustine, who is said to have trained so many missionaries fitted for the episcopal office that he was surnamed "the master of bishops."

Thus alike in the South and in the West of the land which Cæsar's legions had once overrun, centres of light and life had been established. Thus were trained many of the men who were alone found faithful, and ready to stand by their flocks, when the wave of barbarian invasion swept over the country, and the landmarks of Roman civilization seemed destined to be utterly annihilated.[1] Thus were prepared the leaders of that "strange organized polity, one, and united in one vast brotherhood," which awed the Teutonic races with proofs of an unknown and unexpected spiritual power, such as early Hellenes and Latins had never known. "Co-extensive with the Empire, but not *of it*, nor of its laws and institutions; earthly in its outward aspect, but the representative and minister of a perpetual and ever-present kingdom of Heaven; unarmed, defenceless in the

[1] Guizot, Lect. XII.

midst of never-ceasing war, and yet inspiring reverence and receiving homage,"[1] the Church, which had converted the Empire, converted and won over its conquerors.

[1] Dean Church's 'Influences of Christianity,' p. 104.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CELTS OF BRITAIN.

FROM Gaul we cross over to the island whose white cliffs Cæsar beheld from the north-western shores of the land which he was subduing, and whence he found his enemies receiving continual reinforcements.

It is a natural question to ask when the Christian faith was first preached in Britain, but it is one also which it is next to impossible to answer. The same obscurity which shrouds the origin of the earliest Gallic Churches, hides the traces of the first planting of the Church in our own land.

Some have longed to believe that St. Paul was the first apostle of Britain, and in the vague phrase of Clement of Rome, that he extended his labours "to the utmost bounds of the West," have sought a confirmation of their wishes.[1] But the phrase is most naturally interpreted of Spain, though, as we have seen,[2] it may include a visit of the apostle to Gaul.

To the domain of legend, which history cannot accept, we must also relegate the tradition of the

[1] Ἐπὶ τὸ τέρμα τῆς δύσεως ἐλθών.—S. Clem., 'Ep. ad Cor. v.'

[2] See above, p. 31.

ordination by St. Paul of Aristobulus, as a bishop for Britain; the story in the Welsh Triads, that Bran the Blessed, the father of Caractacus, was left seven years in Rome, a hostage for his son, and brought thence the faith he had there learnt;[1] the beautiful romance that Joseph of Arimathæa, accompanied by twelve companions, preached the gospel at Avalon or Glastonbury, and striking his staff into the earth, made it burst, like Aaron's rod, into leaf, and bloom with the blossom of the Holy Thorn; and the statement that in the second century Lucius,[2] king of the Britons, sent ambassadors to Eleutherus, bishop of Rome, and asked to have the gospel preached to him and to his people, and received back his ambassadors instructed and ordained, as preachers of the faith.

We must come back to the regions of sober facts. The chief intercourse of the civilized world with the distant islands of the Western sea was through Gaul, and there can be little doubt that during the second century, if not earlier, some Christians did pass over to our shores,[3] and planted one or more outposts

[1] Williams' 'Eccl. Antiq. of the Cymry,' p. 54.

[2] Bede, 'H. E.,' i. 4. The statement appears to have been taken from a catalogue of Roman bishops, framed about A.D. 530. See Haddan's 'Remains,' p. 227.

[3] Haddan's 'Remains,' p. 26. They certainly did not come directly from the East.

of the Church. The names of the first heralds of the Cross in our isle have been buried in oblivion, but thus much appears certain, that the results of their labours were confined to Roman settlements and Romanized natives. British Christianity confined itself chiefly to "the poorer class of the mixed race of immigrants, which clustered round the chief Roman colonies," and addressed its message chiefly to Roman settlers or the population counted with them.[1]

There seems to be no reason for calling in question the historic reality of the British protomartyr, St. Alban,[2] and of those other Christian sufferers whose names are associated with his, and with the year A.D. 314, we arrive at an historical fact, on which we can take our stand. In that year a council was summoned at Arles to consider the question of the Donatist schism in Africa, and in the acts of the council we find the names of three British bishops, Eborius of York, Restitutus of London, and Adelfius of *Colonia Legionensium*, Lincoln, or *Colonia Lindensium*, Caerleon-on-Usk.[3] Again, we find British bishops at the council of Sardica, A.D. 347, and of Ariminum

[1] See Haddan's 'Churches of the British Confession,' 'Remains,' pp. 218, 231.

[2] Milman's 'Latin Christianity,' ii. 226.

[3] See Haddan and Stubbs, i. 7; Haddan's 'Remains,' p. 230; Freeman's 'Old Eng. Hist.,' p. 21.

A.D. 360. But just as the British martyrs, so far as the accounts can be trusted, belong to Roman towns and stations, so the bishops named belong to the capitals of Roman provinces, and we are driven to the conclusion that the Church of Britain in Roman times was not the Church of the rich or noble, or even the Church of the people, but was "scanty in numbers and poor in wealth."

During the fourth and the fifth centuries we may believe the British Churches were to be found in the chief cities. Their members, however, were drawn mainly from the lower classes of the town populations, while the classical temples were still frequented by worshippers of a richer grade. As regards the rural districts, the word "pagan" tells its own tale. Masses of half-civilized serfs still clung to local rites and their ancestral heathenism, and we may conceive of native Britain as "not more Christian than native India is at the present time."

Progress there doubtless was, and would have been on a still greater scale, but it was rudely interrupted by the decline of Roman power and the "series of constant, systematic, successful" occupations of British soil by Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, before which the Britons retired slowly and unwillingly to the western side of the island.[1] For upwards of two centuries

[1] Freeman's 'Norman Conquest,' i. 13, 20.

the struggle was continued, during which the invader showed no mercy and knew not the name of pity. "The conquest of Gaul by the Franks, or that of Italy by the Lombards, proved little more than a forcible settlement of the one or the other among tributary subjects, who were destined in a long course of ages to absorb their conquerors. French is the tongue, not of the Frank, but of the Gaul whom he overcame; and the fair hair of the Lombard is now all but unknown in Lombardy. But the English conquest of Britain was a sheer dispossession and slaughter of the people whom the English conquered. In all the world-wide struggle between Rome and the German invaders, no land was so stubbornly fought for or so hardly won. But it was just through the long and merciless nature of the struggle that of all the German conquests this proved the most thorough and complete. At its close Britain had become England, a land that is, not of Britons, but of Englishmen."[1]

It is natural, therefore, at this point to turn to the part of the island whither the Britons retired, and where British churches, elsewhere pillaged and fired, still stood. "Welsh-land," the land of "the unintelligible people," as the English called the country of the races they drove before them further and fur-

[1] Green's 'History of the English People,' vol. i. p. 28, Library Edition.

ther west, and whose speech they could not understand, included (i) Cumberland, or the Clyde valley kingdom, from the Clyde to the Mersey: (ii) Wales, or Cambria; (iii) West Wales, that is, Devon and Cornwall. The seat of their chief power was in the Clyde valley. There the great king Arthur is said to have gathered round him a band of brave warriors, and to have striven hard

"To break the heathen and uphold the Christ."[1]

But after his death, A.D. 520, the tide of English invasion could be checked no longer, and the "Welsh" had hard work to hold their own even in the country west of the Severn and the Dee. As we strain our eyes through the mist and try to realize the life of the Celtic Church, the forms which emerge from the sea of legend that covers this period, are dim and shadowy, and seem at times to elude all efforts to ascertain their reality. One type distinguishes all. Hermits, devoted to celibacy, settle down in the wildest districts, convert, and baptize, and found monastic schools on the largest scale.

Let us take some of the more prominent instances as specimens of many whose names have perished, but whose work in their day and their generation was of the utmost value.

[1] Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King.'

St. Cadok, or Kadok, was the son of Gundleus, or Gwynllyw Filwr, one of the petty kings of South Wales. His mother, Gladusa, was the daughter of Braghan or Brechan, a chieftain whose castle was at Talgarth, about nine miles from the town of Brecknock.[1] The boy was baptized by an Irish anchoret named Meuthi, who gave him the name of "Cadoc," or "the Warlike," and at the age of seven he was handed over to him to be trained and educated. Twelve years were passed by the young prince in his society, attending to and waiting upon his teacher, and learning all that he could teach him of the liberal arts.

Refusing to succeed his father in his principality, he retired to Gwent, or Caerwent, in Monmouthshire, where he studied under another Irish saint named Tathai, and after awhile would seem to have passed across to Ireland, and for three years continued his education in the abbey school of Lismore.[2] Returning from Ireland, he removed to Glamorgan, and founded the monastery of Llancarvan, near Cowbridge, and became its first abbot. A large company of Irish appear to have accompanied him on his return from Ireland, and Llancarvan soon became a famous centre of social and secular learning. The monastic community over which he presided devoted their lives not merely to cultivating the wild forest land and

[1] 'Vita S. Cadoci,' p. 311. [2] Ibid., cap. vii.

clearing the waste, but to the study also and transcription of the Holy Scriptures. Like similar institutions in Gaul, Llancarvan received within its walls, besides formal candidates for the monastic life, many pupils who were anxious to obtain the best secular education that could be given. Amongst these came many sons of the chiefs and petty kings of Wales, over whom the prince-abbot exercised unbounded influence. To these he addressed special instruction, and if he succeeded in prevailing upon them to act up to some of his aphorisms, he did well for his day and his generation. "Remember," St. Cadoc used to say, "that thou art a man, and that there is nothing like him who is king over himself."

The prince-abbot, like all his nation, was also a poet, and he loved to gather up in a versical form the instruction which he gave to his pupils. A number of these have been preserved, and illustrate, in a remarkable manner, the spark of poetic fire which could be found in a British cloister in the sixth century far from the sources of classic lore.

Thus St. Cadoc was wont to sing of truth :—

"Truth is the elder daughter of God.
Without light nothing is good.
Without light there is no piety.
Without light there is no faith.
There is no light without the sight of God."

And again :—

"Without knowledge, no power.
Without knowledge, no wisdom.
Without knowledge, no freedom.
Without knowledge, no beauty.
Without knowledge, no nobleness.
Without knowledge, no victory.
Without knowledge, no honour.
Without knowledge, no God.
The best of attitudes is humility.
The best of occupation, work.
The best of sentiments, pity.
The best of cares, justice.
The best of pains, that which a man takes to make peace between two enemies.
The best of sorrows, sorrow for sin.
The best of characters, generosity."

Again, when one of his disciples asked him to define the love of God, he answered :—

"Love, it is Heaven."
"And hate?" asked a disciple.
"Hate is Hell."
"And conscience?"
"It is the eye of God in the soul of man."

These poetical aphorisms of the saint sufficiently attest the completeness with which the spirit of the

Christian faith had been apprehended in Wales in the sixth century.

Before he died, St. Cadoc is said to have been successful in winning over not only his mother, the beautiful Gladusa, but even the old robber chief, his father, from whom he inherited great territorial wealth, and an authority which he used to secure, for the community he had founded, safety and the respect of neighbouring chiefs. At once prince and abbot, austere, solitary, and feudal chief, he was enabled to accomplish with success the great task of directing the energies of his numerous monastic followers, defending them against violence, and protecting the interests of his poorer neighbours. "Are you fools," said the steward of one of his domains to the squires of a Cambrian prince who would have taken from him by force the milk of his cows; "are you unaware that our master is a man of great honour and dignity? that he has a family of three hundred men maintained at his cost, a hundred priests, a hundred knights, and a hundred workmen, without counting women and children?"[1]

No wonder with such forces at his command he was enabled to exert a wholesome influence over the robber chiefs around him, and to regulate many of the rude forms of law subsisting amongst the barbaric

[1] Montalembert, iii. 63.

tribes. The object at which he aimed, and the ideas he entertained of righteous laws and just enactments, are well illustrated in a poem of his which has been preserved under the name of the "Hate of Cadoc":—

"I hate the judge who loves money, and the bard who loves war, and the chiefs who do not guard their subjects, and the nations without vigour; I hate houses without dwellers, lands untilled, fields that bear no harvest, landless clans, the agents of error, the oppressors of truth; I hate him who respects not father and mother, those who make strife among friends, a country in anarchy, lost learning, and uncertain boundaries; I hate journeys without safety, families without virtue, lawsuits without reason, ambushes and treasons, falsehood in council, justice unhonoured; I hate a man without a trade, a labourer without freedom, a home without a teacher, a false witness before a judge, the miserable exalted, follies in place of teaching, knowledge without inspiration, sermons without eloquence, and a man without conscience."[1]

Ere long the tide of Jutish and Saxon invasion rolled on towards the banks of the Severn and the Usk, the boundaries of St. Cadoc's monastic

[1] M. de la Villemarque, 'Légende Celtique,' p. 309, quoted in Montalembert, iii. 67, 68.

domains.[1] Leaving Wales, he sailed to Armorica, and there on a little desert island of the archipelago of Morbihan, founded a new monastery, and, to make his school accessible to the children of the district, who had to cross to the isle and back again in a boat, he threw a stone bridge 450 feet long across this arm of the sea. Here he sojourned for several years, and then returned once more to Britain, not to find rest in his beloved monastery of Llancarvan, but to labour amongst his Celtic brethren, who had survived the menaces of the Saxons, and to settle down in the very centre of the invaders.

He is said to have selected Weedon, in Northamptonshire, as the scene of his labours, and here he received the martyr's crown. One day, we are told, he was celebrating the Divine office, when a body of Saxons mounted on horses, and chasing the Christians before them, entered the church, and crowded towards the altar. A Saxon chief, brandishing his lance, advanced towards the saint and struck him to the heart. Cadoc fell upon his knees, and with a prayer to "his invisible King and Saviour, Jesus Christ," expired for his countrymen.

[1] One of the statements of Geoffrey of Monmouth, accepted by Raine and others, is, that when the Saxons drove the British fugitives into Wales and Cornwall, Theon, bishop of London, and Thadioc of York, fled into Wales with their surviving clergy.

The monastic community established by Cadoc at Llancarvan was reproduced in many parts of the Principality by eminent abbots. They usually bore the title of *Bangor*, that is, "high choir or circle." One of these was the famous Bangor "Iscoed," in the south-eastern corner of Flintshire, and was said to have contained upwards of two thousand monks at the time of its destruction.[1] Another was that Bangor which still bears that name. Its first head, according to Celtic custom, was at once abbot and bishop. Another "Bangor" was the present St. Asaph, or Llan Elwy, "the church on the Elwy," of which we shall speak later on.[2]

Yet another celebrated monastery at Caer Worgern was presided over by St. Iltyd. He is said to have been born in Brittany, and to have begun life as a wild warrior, but was converted to Christian ways by the sudden death of some of his companions, who had ventured to extort bread and other provisions from the princely abbot of Llancarvan. In a paroxysm of terror he fled, it was said, from his young and beautiful wife into the forest, and built for himself a hut of branches on the banks of a river in Gloucestershire. In vain she followed him, and begged to be allowed to share his labours. Not only was she refused, but she found

[1] Bede, ii. 2, Iscoed = "underwood."

[2] See below, pp. 141–143.

her fair knight of other days in mean attire, and covered with mud, digging vigorously at the bottom of a dyke of earth and stones, which he was constructing to keep out the inundation of a neighbouring river. The spectacle was sufficient. "Fearing to displease God, and one so beloved by God," she left him to his strange life of seclusion and the administration of the religious house which rose round his cell, where he is said to have taught his scholars "all the arts" then known, and from whom the place takes its present name of Llantwit Major.

One of these disciples was the most eminent of all the Welsh saints, St. David, or as he is called in his native tongue, Dewi. His father was a prince in Cardiganshire. His mother was Non, Nonna, or Nonnita, daughter of Gynyr. His birthplace was near Hen-Mynyw, and he was baptized by an Irish bishop, "who, by Divine providence, had arrived at that time from Ireland." Educated first at Llanwit Major, he was afterwards transferred to the college of Paulinus,[1] a pupil of St. Germanus, of Auxerre, at the "White House," or Whitland, in Carmarthenshire.[2] Here he spent ten years in the study of Holy Scripture and all

[1] Or Paul Hén, Haddan and Stubbs, i. 164.

[2] Bishop Jones and Freeman, 'History of St. David's,' p. 250.

the learning of the time. Before long he became the head of a society founded by himself, or restored at a spot near Hen-Mynyw, which was afterwards named out of respect to his memory, Ty Dewi, the "House of David," or St. David's."[1] Into his school he swept all the youth of the neighbourhood. His "rule" was of the utmost severity. Not only was all individual property prohibited, and manual and intellectual labour demanded of every inmate of the institution, but the monks were required to yoke themselves to the plough and turn up the soil without the aid of oxen. Nor did the labours of the day end with sawing wood or drawing the plough. They were succeeded by reading and writing in the solitude of each cell, and the celebration of Divine service.

As abbot of a famous monastery he wielded chor-episcopal rights in his society, and his saintly character and apostolic zeal sufficiently account for the high reputation he acquired. Without accepting, therefore, the legends of a regular Welsh archbishopric at Caerleon, held first by Dubricius or Dyfrig, and transferred by him to David, who removed the seat of the primate to Menevia,[2] we may conclude that he esta-

[1] See article in Smith's 'Dict. of Eccl. Biography.'

[2] See Haddan and Stubbs, 'Councils,' i. pp. 144, 145, 148; Bishop Jones and Freeman's 'St. David's,' p. 253.

blished, about the close of the sixth century, a see at the extreme south-western corner of the Welsh Principality. The reason of his choice of this remote and solitary spot is not far to seek. Like many others of the old Celtic bishops, he "valued monastic seclusion even more than facilities for episcopal administration,"[1] and here, truly, he would find it. But, besides these, there were more practical reasons. We have seen that St. David owed his baptism to an Irish bishop from Munster. Now Menevia, the "Menapia" of the Itineraries, was one of the ports from which ships passed over into Ireland.[2] The Roman road known as the Via Julia conducted to it, and the Menapii, a tribe inhabiting the eastern coast of Ireland, were, no doubt, a colony from the opposite shores of Britain. His baptism had cemented a connection between the bishop and Ireland. It is not impossible, therefore, that he may have desired to develop the bond of union between his monastic followers and their Celtic brethren, by planting the seat of his bishopric on that imposing headland, which, like "an eagle's beak,"[3] thrusts itself forward into the sea, as if it would stretch out its arms towards the Green Isle which lies so near. Here, at any rate, he lived and died, probably,

[1] Canon Bright's 'Early English Church History,' p. 33.
[2] Wright's 'Celt, Roman, and Saxon,' p. 138.
[3] Montalembert, iii. 54.

in A.D. 601,[1] and here he was buried; and for twelve centuries since, mariners navigating those seas have called the rocks opposite the headlands of St. David's by the name of "The Bishop and Clerks," in memory of the Apostle of South Wales and his zealous missionary labours.

But of many others, who laboured with equal devotion what now remains, save their names, and they often so disguised that they are hardly recognised? In Wales alone there are no less than four hundred and seventy-nine village names derived from local saints; and "the parishes which bear such names are almost always the most ancient, their ecclesiastical portion being that of the mother parishes, affiliated to which are the churches dedicated to saints in the Romish calendar. Hence, these village names may fairly be adduced as evidence in any attempt to localize the scene of the labours of these primitive missionaries."[2] Thus, while Llandewi marks the spot where St. David in synod is said to have refuted Pelagius, Llangybi near Caerleon, and Caergybi at Holyhead, recall the name of St. Cybi; Llanbadern, in Cardiganshire, near Aberystwith, of St. Padern, who came to Wales from Brittany;[3] Beddgelert, of St. Celert; Llangattock,

[1] Haddan and Stubbs, 'Councils,' p. 120.
[2] Isaac Taylor's 'Words and Places,' p. 229, ed. 2.
[3] Haddan and Stubbs, 'Councils,' p. 159.

in Brecknock and Monmouthshire, of St. Cadoc. An inscription on a stone at Towyn, in Monmouthshire, recalls the name of St. Cadfan, a native of Brittany, who is said to have come to Wales to preach against Pelagianism. Under the form of Ffread or Ffraed, lurks disguised the name of St. Bride, an Irish female saint almost equally popular with Britons and English, and is the designation of several churches in Monmouthshire, Herefordshire,[1] and Radnorshire. Teilo is so named from the second Bishop of Llandaff, a contemporary with St. David, who passed some time in Brittany with St. Samson.[2]

Cornwall, first Christianized by Irish and Welsh missionaries during the fifth and sixth centuries, shares with Wales[3] the name of St. Cain. The parish of St. Burdoch, west of Falmouth, marks the name of an abbot and confessor of the sixth century, said to have succeeded to the see of Dol in Brittany;[4] while Gunwallo is so called from his disciple St. Winbolaus. Perranzabuloe, or St. Perran in Sabulo, a church lately rescued from the drifting sand, recalls the name of St. Piran,[5] a bishop said to have been consecrated

[1] In the 'Liber Landavensis' the place now called Bridstow is designated by its original name of Llandanffread.

[2] Haddan and Stubbs, i. 159.

[3] At Llangain, in Caermarthenshire; Rees, 'Welsh Saints,' 228.

[4] Haddan and Stubbs, ii. 88.

[5] Or Kieran; he was Bishop of Saighir in Ireland, and contemporary with St. Patrick.—Haddan and Stubbs, i. 157.

by St. Patrick for a mission to Cornwall.[1] There is a Cornish rhyme—

> "From Padstow Point to Lundy Light,
> Is a watery grave, by day or night."

This Padstow, or Petrockstow, commemorates St. Petroc, one of St. Patrick's missionary bishops. The names of other saints are still preserved in the Cornish nomenclature; such as Ives, Morran, Hydrock, Maela, Ruth, Sennen, and Zeal.

[1] "There is no older sanctuary in the land, except, perhaps, St. Martin's Church at Canterbury; but if St. Augustine had come there, in Cornwall, he would not have had to have made his way among crowds of heathen people who wondered what he was come for; but there, in Cornwall, he would have found people to meet him with the full knowledge of the Gospel, worshipping there day after day, as well as from Sunday to Sunday, in that little church. St. Augustine would have found himself among people who knew and loved the Gospel which he taught:—This was a strange thought, and they would do wrong to meet there without dwelling a little upon it that day. They knew, perhaps, that in that fifth century there came over from Ireland, which was already Christian, missionary after missionary, who took up his abode on those coasts of theirs. There came she who was afterwards called St. Breoka—from whom they had Breage—and St. Ia—from whom they had St. Ives—St. Uny, St. Gwithian, and, perhaps, greatest amongst them all, St. Piran. They were called in old books brothers and sisters, because they were all of the family of God. As brothers and sisters in this sense they came and settled along the coast of Cornwall, and taught the old forefathers of his hearers the way of God."—Report of the Bishop of Truro's Sermon at the reopening of the church of Peranzabuloe, August, 1878.

CHAPTER V.

ST. PATRICK'S MISSION TO IRELAND.

FROM Wales it is but a step to Ireland. But before speaking of the conversion of the Celtic race there, it may be well to remember that we are passing to a country which had never been subjugated by the Roman arms, and where the conditions of missionary success would be materially altered.

Though it bore down with it in its fall much of the fabric of European society, the Roman Empire, wherever it planted its foot, left behind it the traditions and first principles of civilization. Wherever the Roman soldier or the Roman colonist had been, with his roads, bridges, and fortifications, at London, Eboracum, Caerleon, or Menapia, it was, comparatively speaking, an easy task to establish bishoprics with territorial jurisdiction, and develop missionary institutions. Accustomed to obey the legions and officials by whom they had been Romanized, the Celtic tribes of Gaul and Britain readily accepted the government of those who succeeded to the place of their former governors, and maintained their claims

Stanford's Geog. Estab.t

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to exercise authority by the practical virtue, the piety, and usefulness of their lives. But Ireland had never been familiarized with the details of the Roman colony, and to work out her mission the Church was thrown upon her own inherent resources, and the characteristic institutions of the Celtic races themselves.

Commercial relations, we know from Tacitus, existed between Gaul and Ireland in early times;[1] but a veil hides from us the agents in the earliest diffusion of Christianity in the country. The chronicler, Prosper Aquitanus, tells us, that in A.D. 429 the deacon Palladius moved Pope Celestine to attempt a mission amongst "the Scots believing in Christ," and that two years later, or A.D. 431,[2] Palladius was sent to them in the capacity of bishop. The phrase, "the Scots believing in Christ," can only signify, at this time, "the Scots in Ireland." But whether the purport of the mission of Palladius was to preside over already existing Churches, or to make the barbarian island Christian, has been a matter of dispute. It would seem certain that he landed, with several companions, and, after some opposition, succeeded in baptizing a few converts and erecting three wooden churches.[3]

[1] Taciti 'Vita Agricolæ,' c. 24.
[2] See Bede, 'H. E.,' i. 13; Jaffe's 'Regesta Pont. Rom.,' p. 52.
[3] 'Annals of the Four Masters,' i. 129.

But his stay was of no long duration, and he is said to have crossed over to Britain, and died among the Picts at Fordoun, in Kincardineshire.[1]

But soon afterwards he was followed by another missionary, who was destined to achieve far greater success. A halo of extravagant and miraculous legends has well-nigh hidden the form of Patricius, St. Patrick, Ireland's patron saint, and it is a matter of extremest difficulty to extract the ore of truth from the mass of fable which has overlaid his life and labours. Confining ourselves, however, in the main, to his own rude autobiographical 'Confession,' and his letter to the chief Coroticus, we obtain the following particulars.

The birth-name of the apostle of Ireland would seem to have been "*Succat*," signifying "god of war," or "strong in war." His parents were Christians. His father, Calphurnius, was a deacon; his grandfather, Potitus, a priest. Though an ecclesiastic, Calphurnius appears to have been a man of curial rank, and to have held some position of comparative influence as a magistrate or counsellor in the Roman colonial settlement near the North Wall in Britain.

The birthplace of the saint is uncertain, and has been the subject of hot dispute. In his 'Confession' he

[1] Hussey, on Bede, i. 13.

himself mentions *Bonavem Taberniae* as the residence of his parents. By some this has been identified with Boulogne, in Normandy, by others with the present Kirkpatrick, between the castle of Dumbarton and the city of Glasgow. The latter conclusion is supported by the greatest weight of evidence; and of the various years which have been assigned to his birth, we shall perhaps not be far wrong if we take A.D. 387 as the most probable.

His parents, as we have said above, were Christians, and he himself had doubtless been instructed in the rudiments of the Christian faith. But in his sixteenth year a sad incident tore him from his father's home. As the eastern coasts of England were afterwards exposed to the ravages of the Northmen, so the western coasts of Scotland were at this time harried by Irish chieftains, who landed in their swift barks, pillaged the country, and having carried off as many as they could of the inhabitants, consigned them to slavery.

In one of these expeditions an attack was made upon the house of Calphurnius. The future founder of the Irish Church, with two of his sisters and a considerable number of his neighbours, was carried away from his home and conveyed as a captive to the north of Ireland. Here he was purchased as a slave by a chief named Miliuc or Milchu, who was

king of North Dalaradia,[1] now the county Antrim, and dwelt in Arcuil, a valley now called the Valley of the Braid, from the river Braid, which flows through it.

The work assigned him was that of tending his master's flocks and herds, and in his 'Confession' he has given us a vivid picture of the hardships he was called to endure, at one time drenched with the rain, at another numbed with the frosts. The good seed, however, sown in early years now bore fruit. Thrown back upon himself, he found alleviation amidst the weary hours of captivity in prayer and meditation, and during the six years of exile he would seem to have made himself acquainted with the language of the native tribes, and to have learnt their habits and modes of life.

When he was twenty-two years of age he effected his escape from Milchu, and, taking ship, after a tempestuous voyage succeeded in returning to his early home. His enjoyment, however, of freedom was not destined to be of long duration. In a second predatory expedition he again was taken captive, and a second time succeeded in making his escape.

His parents, he tells us, earnestly besought him to remain with them for the rest of his life. But other

[1] 'Annals of the Four Masters,' A.D. 388.

ideas had now taken possession of his mind. An inward call, which he regarded as a Divine command, bade him leave his own country and his father's house, and devote himself to the conversion of the Irish, amongst whom he had spent so many years of his youth, and which had become to him a second home.

"In the dead of the night," he says, "I saw a man coming to me as if from *Hiberio*, whose name was *Victoricus*, bearing innumerable epistles. And he gave me one of them, and I read the beginning of it, which contained the words, '*The voice of the Irish, Vox Hiberionacum.*' And whilst I was repeating the beginning of the epistle, I imagined that I heard in my mind the voice of those who were near the wood of *Foclut*, which is near the Western Sea. And thus they cried, '*We entreat thee, holy youth, to come, and henceforth walk amongst us.*' And I was greatly pricked in heart, and could read no more, and so I awoke. Again on another night, I know not, God knoweth, whether it was within me or near me, I heard distinctly words which I could not understand, except that at the end of what was said, there was uttered, '*He who gave His Life for thee, is He who speaketh in thee.*' And so I awoke rejoicing."

Obedient, therefore, to what he deemed the heavenly vision, and disregarding the entreaties of

relatives and friends, he resolved to set out for the monasteries of Southern France and there prepare himself for his great work. A cloud of legends at this point envelops every step he took. But thus much appears tolerably certain. Repairing to the monastery of St. Martin of Tours, he submitted himself for some time to the discipline of that famous seminary. Afterwards he studied under St. .Germanus at Auxerre, and thence repaired to Lerins, where Hilary of Arles and Lupus of Troyes had been educated. Returning thence to Auxerre, he would seem to have been successively ordained deacon and priest, and to have been actively engaged for some time in pastoral duties.

His determination to devote himself to the evangelization of the barbarous people of the land of his captivity found little favour with his friends. But he broke through all obstacles, and in Gaul was consecrated as "bishop of the Irish." It has been claimed in behalf of the Church of Rome that he owed his consecration to Pope Celestine. But there is little or nothing to support the claim,[1] and it was the most direct and natural course that he should seek consecration where he had received his training and holy orders, at the hands of the bishops of Gaul.

[1] See Todd's 'St. Patrick,' pp. 386, 388.

At any rate, about A.D. 432 according to some authorities, about A.D. 440 according to Tillemont and Dr. Todd, he sailed for Ireland with several companions, to commence his arduous mission.

The exact spot where he first landed appears to be somewhat uncertain, but the most probable account is that it was in the region of the Cuolenni, "the territory of which was co-extensive with the present barony of Rathdown, in the north of the county of Wicklow."[1] But reflecting that it was his duty to attempt first the conversion of his old master, Milchu, he sailed northwards to Dalaradia, intending as he had left him without being redeemed, to offer him a double ransom, "an earthly one in money and worldly goods, and a spiritual one by making known to him the Christian faith."

Sailing northwards with this view, he put into Inis Patrick, a small island off Skerries, on the coast of the county of Dublin, which still bears the name of "St. Patrick's Island." The islands forming the Skerries group are low and sandy, easily accessible to light boats or small ships, and offering convenient landing-places. His object was to obtain provisions, of which he appears to have been in want, and he

[1] "The name remains in that of *Glencullen*, a valley near Bray. The old name of the "Sugar Loaf" mountain, in the same district, was *Sliabh-Cualann*."—Todd's 'St. Patrick,' 343, *n*.

sent a party to the mouth of the Nanny Water to seek fish, but without success. From the island the missionary shaped a course past the present county of Down for the mouth of the river Slain, at the south-west extremity of Strangford Lough. Here he left his boat, and advanced with his companions into the interior of the country.

They had not gone far before they met a swine-herd, who, taking them for pirates or robbers, ran away and called his master, whose name was Dichu. Dichu was a chieftain of high birth, and he came out sword in hand to oppose the invaders. But, struck with the venerable appearance of St. Patrick, he stayed his hand, and invited the strangers to his house. The missionary had now an opportunity of delivering his message in a language that Dichu could understand, and not through the frigid medium of an interpreter. The chief listened to his preaching, and became "the first of the Scots" who confessed the faith.

Still anxious to revisit the former scene of his captivity, St. Patrick remained only a few days with his new convert, and set out on foot for Sliabh Mis, a basaltic hill, now called Slemish, where he surveyed the woods where he had so long tended the herds of Milchu. But nothing would induce the old chief to receive the man who had once been his

slave, or to forsake the paganism of his forefathers. His obstinate refusal has been exaggerated in the legends, and he is represented as having set fire to his house and all his substance rather than submit to the teaching of his former slave.

Retracing his steps to the residence of Dichu, St. Patrick remained with him for some time, going about in the neighbourhood preaching and teaching, and there, in the words of the 'Book of Armagh,' "the Faith began to spread." Not only was Dichu baptized with his whole house, but he bestowed upon his instructor a tract of land for the foundation of a church, with a barn or granary. This was converted into a church, and was afterwards known by the name of *Sabhal Patraic*, "Patrick's Granary," and became in after-times a celebrated monastery.[1]

Having thus laid the foundations of Christianity in Dalaradia, he resolved, we are told, to visit the central parts of Ireland and to preach Christ in the very citadel of its idolatry. Easter was approaching,[2] and he determined to select that festival as the season most fitting for his purpose, coinciding as it did with a great pagan solemnity about to be celebrated by the pagan monarch on the famous hill of Tara.

[1] The place still retains the name of Sabhall or Saul, and is situated about two miles N.E. from Downpatrick.

[2] Not necessarily the first Easter celebrated by him in Ireland.

So bidding farewell to Dichu, he sailed to the mouth of the Boyne, and leaving his boat there proceeded on foot with some of his companions to present himself before King Laoghaire.

The legend is that it was Easter Eve when he reached the neighbourhood of Tara, and having erected a tent made preparations for spending the night with his companions. As the smoke of the fire he had kindled rose upwards, it was noticed by the Druids in the king's court, and caused the utmost consternation. To kindle any fire during the solemn assembly of the chiefs, before the king had lighted the sacred fire in the halls of Tara, was a sin of the greatest enormity. Messengers were accordingly sent to summon the daring stranger before the king. His courage won for him the respect of Laoghaire and his nobles, and not only did he proclaim his message, but received permission to carry out the great work on which he had set his heart, so long as he did not disturb the peace of the land.

Leaving the court of Laoghaire, the missionary repaired, we are told, to Telltown in the county of Meath, where was gathered together a great concourse of people to celebrate games and sports of various kinds. Here his life was in danger from a nephew of the king, but he escaped from his anger, and was privileged to receive the youngest brother of Laoghaire

into the Church by baptism. His new convert granted him also a site for a church, and the impression made upon the chief was soon shared by his subjects.

He was now enabled to enter upon a series of missionary tours, which it is, however, impossible to follow with accuracy. Suffice it to say, that though attempts upon his life were again and again made by the heathen Druids, he was protected by the native chiefs, and found ready listeners in the people. "He penetrated the hearts of all," says the writer of the 'Tripartite Life,' "and led them to embrace cordially the Christian faith and doctrine." The seven sons of the chief of the clan Amalgaidh, at an assembly near the wood of Fochlut, and not far from the present town of Killala, were baptized, and twelve thousand of their people. Wherever he found them, the great missionary overthrew the objects of pagan idolatry, and especially the pillar stones, which seem to have been set up in numerous places. The greatest idol of all was that of King Laoghaire, which stood on the plain of Magh Sleacht, in the county of Cavan. It was commonly called *Crom-cruach*, also *Crom-dubh*,[1] "*the black stooping-stone*," and was surrounded by twelve subordinate idols or pillar-stones. This was overthrown, and the superstitious reverence of the people for it received a rude check.

[1] Todd's 'St. Patrick,' p. 128.

But the overthrow of heathen worship was but one part of the work of the "Apostle of Ireland." It was his great aim to plant the truth in the minds of his hearers, which should absorb these errors. Some passages in his 'Confession' illustrate the way in which he proclaimed the message of the faith to the worshippers of the powers of nature, and especially the sun and other heavenly bodies. The great luminary, he declared, which they ignorantly worshipped, did not come into existence of itself, but was created by the Father of all. "Besides Him there is no other God, nor ever was, nor will be. He was in the beginning before all things, and from Him all things take their beginning, both visible and invisible.[1] His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, had become man, and conquered death and ascended into heaven. There He sat, far above all principality and power, and thence He would hereafter come to judge both the quick and the dead, and reward every man according to his deeds. The sun, which we see, rises for our sakes at His bidding day by day, but his splendour will not endure. We believe in and adore the true Sun, Jesus Christ. He will never wane or set, nor will any perish who do His will, but they shall live for ever, even as He liveth

[1] S. Patricii 'Confessio'; O'Connor's 'Script. Hibern.,' I. cxiv. cxvii.

for ever, with God the Father Almighty and the Holy Spirit, world without end."

Another remarkable incident,[1] which bears internal evidence of high antiquity, and was evidently written at a time when paganism was not yet extinct in the country, illustrates the way in which he set before the Celtic mind the faith which he proclaimed. One morning he and his attendants repaired to a fountain called *Clebach* at Cruachan, now Rath-croghan, an ancient residence of the kings of Connaught. Thither came the two daughters of King Laoghaire, and on seeing the strangers, supposed then to be *Duine Sidhe*, fairies, "men of the hills," and said to them, "Who are ye?" And Patrick said unto them, "It were better for you to confess to our true God, than to inquire concerning our race."

The first virgin said,

"Who is God?

"And where is God?

"And of what nature is God?

"And where is His dwelling-place?

"Has your God sons and daughters, gold and silver?

"Is He everliving?

"Is He beautiful?

"Is He in heaven or in earth?

[1] Related in the 'Book of Armagh,' fol. 12, a. a., quoted in Todd's 'Life of St. Patrick,' pp. 452–455.

"In the sea?

"In rivers?

"In mountainous places?

"In valleys?

"Declare unto us the knowledge of Him?

"How shall He be seen?

"How is He to be loved?

"How is He to be found?

"Is it in youth?

"Is it in old age that He is to be found?"

But St. Patrick, full of the Holy Ghost, answered and said,—

"Our God is the God of all men.

"The God of heaven and earth, of the sea and rivers.

"The God of the sun, the moon, and all stars.

"The God of the high mountains and of the lowly valleys.

"The God who is above heaven, and in heaven, and under heaven.

"He hath an habitation in the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all that are therein.

"He inspireth all things.

"He quickeneth all things.

"He is over all things.

"He sustaineth all things.

"He giveth light to the light of the sun.

"And he hath made springs in a dry ground.

"And dry islands in the sea.

"And hath appointed the stars to serve the greater lights.

"He hath a Son co-eternal and co-equal with Himself.

"The Son is not younger than the Father.

"Nor is the Father older than the Son.

"And the Holy Ghost breatheth in them.

"The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are not divided.

"But I desire to unite you to the Heavenly King, inasmuch as you are the daughters of an earthly king—to believe."

And the virgins said, as with one mouth and one heart,—

"Teach us most diligently how we may believe in the Heavenly King. Show us how we may see Him face to face, and whatever thou shalt say unto us we will do."

And Patrick said,—

"Believe ye that by baptism ye put off the sin of your father and your mother?" They answered, "We believe."

"Believe ye in repentance after sin?" "We believe."

"Believe ye in life after death? Believe ye the resurrection at the Day of Judgment?" "We believe."

"Believe ye the unity of the Church?" "We believe."

And they were baptized, and a white garment put upon their heads. And they asked to see the face of Christ, and the Saint said unto them, "Ye cannot see the face of Christ except ye taste of death, and except ye receive the sacrifice." And they answered, "Give us the sacrifice, that we may behold the Son, our Spouse."

And they received the Eucharist of God, and they slept in death.

The articles of the Creed recited in this extract are those alone, it has been observed, which are to be found in symbols of the very highest antiquity, and the dialogue illustrates, what has been already noticed,[1] the Celtic belief in genii or aërial beings, inhabiting mountains, plains, rivers, lakes, and fountains, and the existence of nature-worship in its simplest form.

The labours of the Saint in Connaught are said to have extended over seven years. He then would seem to have revisited Ulster, to have erected numerous churches, and to have left priests and bishops, consecrated either in Gaul or Britain, in the districts of Tirconnel, Dalriada, and Dalaradia. He then

[1] See p. 23.

passed southward to Meath, Navan, and Wicklow. In the territory of the tribe called Laeghis, now the Queen's County, he met Dubhtach, the great bard, whom he had won over to Christianity some years before, and made his disciple Fiacc bishop of Sletty, with jurisdiction over all Leinster.[1] Thence he entered Ossory, baptized Aengus, king of Munster, at Cashel, and removed the idols from the ancient seat of the kings of the south of Ireland. His own acquaintance with the language of the people contributed in no small degree to his signal success, and his great aim was to establish a native ministry wherever he went. From amongst the sons of the chiefs whom he visited, he selected those whom he thought likely to be fit for the work of the ministry, and established monastic schools, where they might be trained for their high office, and to which they flocked with extraordinary eagerness.

The number of such monastic schools excites our surprise. But we must not imagine that they at all resembled the elaborate stone structures of the Middle Ages. The primitive Celtic monastery was of the simplest character, and resembled, more than anything else, a rude village of huts or bothies, made of wood, planks, and moss.[2] The church in these

[1] Todd's 'Life,' p. 466.

[2] See Skene's 'Celtic Scotland,' ii. 57.

monasteries was also frequently built of wood, the usual name for which was *Duirthech*, "a house of oak." Attached to the *Duirthech* was usually a small side building termed *Erdam*, or in Latin "exedra," which was used as a sacristy. There was also a somewhat larger house, which was the refectory, or common eating-house, and where there was a stream of water fit for the purpose, there was a mill, and in connection with it a stone kiln for drying the corn. Somewhat apart from the cells of the monks was the abbot's house, and the house set apart for the reception of guests, which also was of wood. The whole of these buildings were protected by a circumvallation sometimes of earth, sometimes of earth and stone, called the *Rath*, or in Latin "*Vallum*."

The size of these monasteries varied very much, but the smallest usually contained, it would seem, one hundred and fifty monks, while some numbered upwards of eight hundred or a thousand. The larger monasteries were usually situated on the mainland, the smaller were settled on the islands round the coast or in the inland lochs, which seem to have formed an irresistible attraction for the early Celtic saints, probably from the security against danger and the protection from intrusion which they afforded. Thus there were three such monasteries on three small islands in Lough Erne, five in Lough Ree, three in

Lough Corrib, two in Lough Derg. The aggregate of monks in each monastery was termed its *muintir* or *familia*, and while the elder gave themselves up entirely to devotion, the service of the church, and the transcribing of the Scriptures, the working brethren were occupied in the labours of the field. The juniors, or the young, were under instruction, and formed the congregation of the monastery.[1]

It was probably about this period that the incident occurred which drew forth the letter of the Saint, in which we see him endeavouring to check the nefarious system of piracy and slave-dealing, from which he himself had suffered so much in early years. A chieftain named Coroticus, who has been identified with Caredig or Ceredig, and seems to have been a petty sovereign of Cardiganshire, though professing to be a Christian, had descended on the Irish coast with a band of armed followers, murdered several of the natives, and carried off a considerable number to sell them as slaves. The scene of this outrage was one of the very districts where St. Patrick had been baptizing, and had occurred on the very day after the neophytes, arrayed in their white baptismal robes, had received the chrism and the rite of confirmation.

Indignant at this cruelty, he wrote a letter, which

[1] Skene's 'Celtic Scotland,' ii. 63.

he sent by some of his clergy, requesting the chieftain to restore a portion of the plunder and the baptized captives. But his embassy being dismissed with contempt and ridicule, he composed another epistle, in which he inveighed in the strongest terms against his unchristian conduct, and concluded with threatening him with excommunication unless he made the desired restitution, and desisted in future from his marauding habits. His efforts were not more successful than on the former occasion, and as late as the tenth century we find the traffic in full activity between England and Ireland, and the port of Bristol one of its principal centres.

After a sojourn of two years in the district of Louth, St. Patrick would seem to have reached the residence of the kings of Ulster, at Emania, now Navan Fort, near Armagh. The chieftain at this time was Daire, and the missionary, anxious to have a building which should suffice for a religious community, asked for the elevated ridge called Druim Sailech, the "Ridge or Hill of the Sallow" or "Willow-tree." The chief declined to give him a spot which was of military importance, and where probably he had his own abode, but consented to give the strangers a spot on a lower ground called *Da Ferta*, consisting of a circular fort, within which were two graves, in accordance with pagan custom. Here accordingly a

monastery was erected, and after a time the devotion and patience of the strangers made such an impression on the chief, that he was won over to the Christian faith, and bestowed upon St. Patrick the hill which he had originally asked for, and with it all the rights of chieftaincy which he himself possessed. Such is the most ancient account of the foundation of Armagh, afterwards the ecclesiastical metropolis of Ireland. Here its founder spent the remainder of his life, leaving it only from time to time to visit some of the scenes of his earlier labours.

Here, too, in conjunction with the bishops and priests he had gathered round him, he would seem to have held several synods, and to have made regulations for the general direction of the various churches which he had founded. The canons published under his name, as being the result of these synods, can hardly be with truth ascribed to him; but in several of their provisions they point to a period when heathenism was still existing in the country, as recourse was had to soothsayers and the inspection of the entrails of slain animals, in order to discover future events, and illustrate other points, which belong only to a rude age of society.

It was while he was living in retirement at Saul that he was seized with his last illness. Perceiving that his end was approaching, he desired, we are told,

to set out for Armagh, in order that he might be there interred. But increasing weakness rendered the journey impossible, and he was constrained to return to the church of his earliest convert; and there, after a short interval, died on the 17th of March, A.D. 493.

Without accepting the legendary tales which have done so much to obscure the history of his life, it is clear that he had well won his title to be called the "Apostle of Ireland." At a time when the country was given up to a barbarous form of paganism, when clan feuds and bloodshed were rife and common, when chieftains rose and fell suddenly from their place of power, and all was stormy and changeful, he and his companions laid the foundation of churches which were destined for a long time to be the beacon-lights of Western Europe. With the labour of their hands they raised for themselves civilized dwellings amid tangled forests and dreary morasses. After the example of St. Martin, the abbot-bishop of Tours, and the other great religious schools of Gaul, they planted monasteries under abbot-bishops, where the Scriptures were studied, ancient books copied, and a native clergy was trained and educated to be at once the evangelists of their own land, and, as we shall see, of a considerable portion of continental Europe.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CREED OF ST. PATRICK.

BEFORE passing on to speak of the labours of the brethren of the Irish monasteries in Scotland and the isles adjacent, it may be well to endeavour to gain an idea of the doctrine and teaching of the Apostle of Ireland.

The chief document on which we can rest as in any degree trustworthy, is the work composed by himself in his old age, and addressed to the people of Ireland, and entitled his 'Confession.' The title hardly conveys the meaning it was intended to express. The 'Confession' of St. Patrick is not like the 'Confessions,' of St. Augustine, and similar works. It is rather to be relied upon as a *Profession of Faith* indited by him, and as a brief memoir of his life and work in Ireland.

The Latin, in which it is written, is somewhat rude and rugged, and reminds the reader that the author was not trained in schools of human learning. But as a record of the sufferings he endured in early life, and of the spirit in which he toiled in an almost barbarous country for upwards of sixty years, it must

ever be regarded as a work of the greatest possible interest.

(i.) It throws light upon several points, and first and foremost on the subject-matter of his teaching and the faith he professed.

At the commencement of the work he has given us information of much importance upon this head.

After speaking of the school of exile and affliction, through which he passed in early years, of the solitary hours he spent in communing with God, and of his becoming, by means of solitude, the freedman of Christ, he goes on to say,—"Wherefore I am not able, nor would it be right, to be silent on such great benefits and such great grace which [God] hath vouchsafed unto me in the land of my captivity; for this is our recompense [to Him] that after we have been corrected and brought to know God, we should exalt and confess His wondrous works before every nation which is under the whole heaven: that there is none other God, nor ever was, nor shall be hereafter, except God the Father, unbegotten, without beginning, from whom is all beginning, upholding all things (as we have said); and His Son Jesus Christ, whom we acknowledge to have been always with the Father, before the beginning of the world, spiritually with the Father, in an ineffable manner begotten, before all beginning; and by Him were made things

visible and invisible; and being made man, and having overcome death, He was received into heaven unto the Father. And [the Father] hath given unto Him all power, above every name, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth, that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and God. Whom we believe, and we look for His coming, who is soon about to be the judge of quick and dead, who will render unto every man according to his works, and hath poured into us abundantly the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the pledge of immortality (*pignus immortalitatis*), who maketh the faithful and the obedient to become the sons of God the Father, and joint heirs with Christ, whom we confess and worship (*quem confitemur et adoramus*) one God in the Trinity of the sacred name. For He Himself hath said by the prophet, Call upon Me in the day of thy tribulation and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt magnify Me. And again He saith, It is honourable to reveal and to confess the works of God."

The first point which strikes the reader on the perusal of this "Profession of Faith" is the strong resemblance of the creed here given to the Confession of Nicæa, though we cannot absolutely conclude that the author had seen that creed. But it is noticeable also that it omits the article relating to the

burial of our Lord and the Descent into Hell, and there is no mention of the resurrection of the body. "It seems evidently," remarks Dr. Todd, "to have been written before the Macedonian controversy. There is no allusion to Pelagianism, or to any of the great heresies of the day. It contains, however, as far as it goes, a statement of St. Patrick's doctrine. He attributes the creation of all things to the Son. He teaches his disciples that the second person of the Trinity promotes in us abundantly the gift of the Holy Ghost, "the pledge of immortality." It is the Holy Ghost who maketh us sons of God the Father and joint heirs with Christ; it is the Holy Ghost whom we worship with the Father and the Son, One God, in the Trinity of the Sacred Name, or perhaps the meaning may be under the sacred name of the Trinity." [1]

(ii.) The 'Confession' next throws light on the mode in which he sought to present the truth to the heathen tribes whom he sought to instruct.

His teaching, we see, was eminently *objective*. To the worshippers of the powers of nature, and especially the sun, he proclaimed the existence of one God, the Creator of all things, and then went on to dwell upon the life, death, resurrection, and as-

[1] Todd's 'Life of St. Patrick,' p. 390.

cension of His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who is the true Sun, and who shall never wane nor set.

But those whom he addressed believed, as we have seen, in the efficacy of charms and incantations and the mysterious power of the Druids and magicians. It was natural, then, that he should have endeavoured to arm himself against the mysterious powers of darkness, who laboured to oppose his operations, and to fortify the hearts of his converts against the influences of superstitions which they were only learning to throw off.

It is interesting, therefore, to notice a singular tradition, that on the occasion of his appearing before King Laoghaire he composed a hymn of the nature of a *Lorica*, or, in Irish, *Luirech*, a composition intended as a breastplate or corselet to protect from spiritual foes. It is preserved in the Irish Book of Hymns, and was first published by Dr. Petrie, who says that some portions of it are still remembered by the peasantry, and repeated at bedtime as a protection from evil.

The following literal translation of it is given by Dr. Todd :—

" 1. I bind to myself to-day,—
The strong power of an invocation of the Trinity,
The faith of the Trinity in Unity,
The Creator of the elements.

2. I bind to myself to-day,—
The power of the Incarnation of Christ, with that of His Baptism,
The power of the Crucifixion, with that of His Burial,
The power of the Resurrection, with the Ascension,
The power of the coming to the Sentence of Judgment.

3. I bind to myself to-day,—
The power of the love of Seraphim,
In the obedience of Angels,
In the hope of Resurrection unto reward,
In the prayers of the noble Fathers,
In the predictions of the Prophets,
In the preaching of Apostles,
In the faith of Confessors,
In the purity of Holy Virgins,
In the acts of righteous men.

4. I bind to myself to-day,—
The power of Heaven,
The light of the Sun,
The whiteness of Snow,
The force of Fire,
The flashing of Lightning,
The velocity of Wind,

The depth of the Sea,
The stability of the Earth,
The hardness of Rocks.

5. I bind to myself to-day,—
The Power of GOD to guide me,
The Might of GOD to uphold me,
The Wisdom of GOD to teach me,
The Eye of GOD to watch over me,
The Ear of GOD to hear me,
The Word of GOD to give me speech,
The Hand of GOD to protect me,
The Way of GOD to prevent me,
The Shield of GOD to shelter me,
The Host of GOD to defend me
Against the snares of demons,
Against the temptations of vices,
Against the lusts of nature,
Against every man who meditates injury to me,
Whether far or near,
With few or with many.

6. I have set around me all these powers
Against every hostile savage power
Directed against my body and my soul,
Against the incantations of false prophets,
Against the black laws of heathenism,
Against the false laws of heresy,

Against the deceits of idolatry,
Against the spells of women, and smiths, and druids,
Against all knowledge which blinds the soul of man.

7. Christ protect me to-day
Against poison, against burning,
Against drowning, against wound,
That I may receive abundant reward.

8. Christ with me,[1] Christ before me,
Christ behind me, Christ within me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ at my right, Christ at my left,
Christ in the fort,
Christ in the chariot-seat,
Christ in the poop.[2]

9. Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me.
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks to me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

[1] Compare Bishop Andrews' 'Preces Privatæ,' p. 127; Anglo-Catholic Library, Oxford, 1853.

[2] That is, Christ when I am in the fort (at home); Christ when I am in the chariot-seat (travelling by land); and in the poop (travelling by water).

10. I bind to myself to-day,—
This strong power of an invocation of the Trinity,
The faith of the Trinity in Unity,
The Creator of the elements."

That this Hymn is of great antiquity cannot be questioned; and in the seventh century it was certainly believed to be the composition of St. Patrick. It is written in a very ancient dialect of the Irish Celtic, and was evidently composed during the existence of pagan usages in the country. "It makes no allusion to Arianism, or any of the heresies prevalent in the Continental Church. It notices no doctrine or practice of the Church that is not known to have existed before the fifth century. In its style and diction, although written in a different language, there is nothing very dissimilar to the 'Confession' and the letter about Coroticus, and nothing absolutely inconsistent with the opinion that it may be by the same author."[1]

This is further confirmed by the internal evidence afforded by the composition itself. It contains, it will be noticed, a prayer against "women,[2] smiths,

[1] Todd's 'Life of St. Patrick,' p. 429.

[2] The magical powers supposed to belong to aged women and blacksmiths are well known. A belief in them continues to prevail in some parts of Ireland and Scotland to the present day.

and Druids," together with the invocation of the power of the sky, the sun, fire, lightning, wind, and other created things. This tends to show that in spite of the undoubted piety and fervent Christian faith of the author, he had not yet fully shaken off all pagan prejudices, and just as we shall see in the case of the Teutons in England and on the Continent, so here in Ireland, this class of superstitions would naturally linger longest in men's minds, and be with the greatest difficulty overcome.

The Hymn may be taken, in connection with the 'Profession of Faith' above alluded to, as a fair representation of the teaching of the great Apostle of Ireland. Whether it was actually composed by him cannot be exactly determined, but it breathes the spirit of the times in which he lived, and represents his work and character in a far more probable and favourable light than that which distinguishes him in the legendary lives. There he comes before us as a great magician, superior in power to the magicians who confronted him, calling down judgments from heaven, one who delighted to terrify and coerce, rather than to persuade and win. But this Hymn, when allowances are made for a tincture of old superstitious beliefs, reveals a groundwork of pure and undoubted Christianity, and a firm faith in the power of Christ as a real protector of those who are set in

the midst of many and great dangers, and "by reason of the frailty of their nature cannot stand upright."

(iii.) In regard to Church orders, the 'Confession' makes it plain that he recognized the three grades of bishops, priests, and deacons. There was a tendency, indeed, to multiply bishops; and in Ireland each bishop seems to have acted independently, subject only to the abbot of his monastery, or, in the spirit of clanship, to his chieftain.[1] But the same tendency prevailed in early times on the Continent of Europe and in the East, and many canons of Councils were made to restrict the practice, one of the earliest enactments of the kind being that of the Council of Laodicea, A.D. 372, which prohibited the consecration of bishops for villages, or places where there were no towns.

In Ireland, the consequence of the system was the great multiplication of bishops. There was little or no restraint placed upon their consecration. Every man of eminence for piety or learning was promoted to the order of bishop, as a sort of *degree* or mark of distinction. Of these not a few lived as solitaries or in monasteries, while many established schools for the practice of the religious life and the cultivation of sacred learning, without having any fixed diocese, or any fixed episcopal duties, and many, fired with

[1] Todd's 'Life of St. Patrick,' p. 27.

missionary zeal, went forth to the Continent and Great Britain to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles.[1]

(iv.) Besides the works already alluded to, tradition has ascribed to the saint the arduous work of reforming the ancient Druidical or Pagan laws of Ireland, under the title of *Senchus Mòr*, or "Great Antiquity." But though portions of it may be ascribed to a remote age, as a whole it can scarcely be regarded as of later date than the ninth or tenth century.

Besides the *Senchus Mòr*, the canons of certain synods have been preserved. One of these is entitled simply "The Synod of St. Patrick," and the other "The Synod of Bishops, that is, Patrick, Auxilius, and Isserninus." The former has no pretensions to genuineness. The latter synod, if genuine, must have been held before the year A.D. 459, and one of the canons evidently refers to a very rude state of society, but many of them imply a far more settled state of things than could have existed in the times of the Apostle of Ireland.

(v.) It is impossible to pass from this account of St. Patrick to other portions of the Celtic mission-field without noticing the life and labours of "the Mary of Ireland," the famous St. Brigida, or St. Bride.

[1] Article 'Bishop,' in Smith's 'Dictionary of Christian Biography'; Todd's 'Life of St. Patrick,' p. 27.

As the foundress of religious communities for her own sex, she claims a place beside the earliest founder of the faith in Hibernia. Such histories of her as have come down to us are mainly records of signs and wonders purporting to have been wrought by her; but still, without doubt, she stands forth in history with a marked individuality, and there is no doubt that she is one of the most popular of the Celtic saints. The number of churches dedicated to her honour exceeds the power of enumeration, and the actual prevalence of the name she bore among the Irish peasantry attests the deep regard paid to her memory.[1]

So far as it is possible to put together the facts which come to the surface from the sea of legend and tradition, we gather the following salient features of her history :—

Her father was Dubhtach, a man of Leinster, and her mother a slave or captive. She was born at Fochart, now Faughart, near Dundalk, about A.D. 450, and was received and baptized, along with her mother, by a disciple of St. Patrick. Desirous of avoiding marriage, she betook herself to Bishop Macchille, at Usny Hill, Westmeath, who gave her the white robe, dedicating her to virginity, about A.D. 467, and she soon acquired a reputation for wisdom and piety.

[1] Bishop Forbes' 'Kal. Scotch Saints,' 287–291.

Her chief residence was the monastery of Kildare, "the cell of the oak," which she founded, and with which other houses for men and women were rapidly affiliated.

As these arose in increasing numbers, "she reflected," we are told, that "she ought to provide with prudent care, regularly in all things, for the souls of her people," as well as for the churches of the many provinces that adhered to her. She therefore came to the conclusion "that she could not be without a high priest to consecrate churches, and to settle the ecclesiastical degrees in them. The result was that she pitched upon a holy man, a solitary, adorned with all virtues, and by whom God had wrought many miracles. She sent for him from his desert, and went herself to meet him. He agreed to her proposals, and she engaged him to govern the Church with her in episcopal dignity, that nothing of sacerdotal order should be wanting in her churches."[1]

His name appears to have been Aedh or Hugh, and was known as "Aedh the Wise."

She now devoted herself to self-denying labours for her Lord, and speedily acquired unbounded influence over the enthusiastic Celts, who crowded to her monasteries, and regarded her as a "mother in

[1] See the quotation from the Life of St. Brigid in Todd's 'St. Patrick,' p. 10.

Israel." She is said to have prepared St. Patrick's winding-sheet, and at the age of seventy-four she herself departed to the Lord, about A.D. 513.

Thus the Christian faith dawned upon Ireland through the instrumentality of two slaves![1]

[1] Montalembert, 'Monks of the West.'

CHAPTER VII.

ST. COLUMBA AND THE CONVERSION OF THE PICTS.

THE mantle of the Apostle of Ireland fell upon many devoted disciples, who continued his work in many places, but on none more conspicuously than the founder of the far-famed monastery of Iona, and the Apostle of the Northern Picts.

Scotland was not, indeed, now for the first time visited by the Christian missionary. Long before, in the troubled period when the invasion of the Picts and Scots overturned the Roman power in Britain, these rude tribes began to receive the light of Christianity.

The earliest labourer in this mission-field was St. Nynia, or Ninian, but his life and works are involved in much obscurity. He is said to have been a Briton, and to have been brought up at Rome. Journeying homewards he visited St. Martin, bishop of Tours, who ordained him to his missionary work, and he became the Apostle of the Southern or Lowland Picts, between the Grampians and the two Roman walls. He built a church in Galloway for his bishopric,

which, being erected of stone, instead of the usual wood or wattled work, was called the "White House," *Candida Casa.* Tradition has identified this with Whithern, in Wigtonshire, the remains of which might be seen when Bede wrote, some two hundred and fifty years afterwards.[1] His period of activity is supposed by various authorities to have ranged between A.D. 410 and A.D. 432, but however it may have been with the district then evangelized before the departure of the Romans, it is certain that it did not retain the leavening influences now introduced through the troublous period that followed. The results, of which we are about to trace the commencement and the history, were far more permanent.

St. Columba, like St. David and St. Cadoc, was of princely lineage. His father Fedhlimidh was descended from Niall of the Nine Hostages, monarch of Ireland. His mother Eithne traced her lineage to Cathaeir Mor, king of Leinster, and afterwards king of Ireland. He was born at Gartan, among the wildest of the mountains of Donegal, on the seventh of December, in A.D. 521, and had a brother and three sisters. The priest Cruithnechan baptized him at Temple-Douglas, halfway between Gartan and Letterkenny, and he was named first Crimthann

[1] Bede, 'H. E.,' iii. 4; and see Bishop Forbes' 'Life of St. Ninian.'

("*wolf*") and then Colum ("*a dove*"). He soon, however, became known as *Columcille*, or "Columba of the Churches," from the frequency of his attendance, even while yet a child, at the church of Temple-Douglas, or, as others think, from the many monastic communities founded and governed by him in later life.[1]

From his native hamlet in Donegal, when he had attained a proper age, he was removed to the famous school of Finnian, or Finbar, of Maghbile, where he was ordained deacon. Hence he went to Leinster, and placed himself under the instruction of an aged bard, named Gemman, and derived from him at once his taste for poetry and that respect for the bardic order which afterwards, as we shall see, he was not ashamed to declare.

Leaving Gemman, he became the disciple of Finnian in his famous monastic seminary of Clonard, and thus united in himself the training of Finnian of Maghbile, derived from the great monastery of Candida Casa,[2] and that of his namesake of Clonard, derived, as we have seen, from David, Gildas, and Cadoc of Wales.[3] At the age of twenty-five he would seem to have been advanced to the order of

[1] See Dr. Reeve's note, 'Life,' p. 225.

[2] See above, p. 43.

[3] Skene's 'Celtic Scotland,' ii. 53.

the priesthood by Etchen, an anchorite bishop of Clonfad, in Westmeath,[1] and, like many of his countrymen, devoted himself to the foundation of churches and monasteries. One of these was at Derry, the site of which was given him by one of his relatives, a prince of the country; a second was the church of Raphoe, in Donegal; a third at *Dairmag*, now Durrow, in King's county, which is termed by Bede a "noble monastery," and was called, from the profusion of oak trees in the neighbourhood, Dearmach, "the plain of oaks";[2] another at Kells, in the north-west of the county of Meath; another at Lanbay, an island off the coast of the county of Dublin; yet others at Drumcliff, north of Sligo; at Moone, in the county of Kildare, and at Tory Island, off the coast of Donegal.[3]

In the foundation of these and other monasteries, Columba was busily engaged till the year A.D. 561, when he left Ireland on his famous mission to the Western Highlands of Scotland. His motive for undertaking this mission has been variously repre-

[1] For the legend why he was not raised to the episcopate, see Todd's 'S. Patrick,' pp. 70, 71.

[2] Bede, iii. 4. The most interesting relic of the abbey is the beautiful Evangeliarium, known as 'the Book of Durrow,' now preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin.

[3] For a complete list see Dr. Reeve's 'Adamnan,' ed. 1874, pp. xlix.–lx.

sented. Some writers have represented it as a sort of penance imposed upon him, with his own consent, in consequence of a feud, which led to the battle of Cooldrevny, situated between Sligo and Drumcliff, in which the king of Connaught defeated Diarmaid, the king of Ireland.

Two causes have been assigned to the battle. One, that Diarmaid had forcibly taken Curnan, the son of the king of Connaught, from under the protection of Columba, and so violated one of the most cherished privileges of the Irish monastic Church at this time—the right of sanctuary. The other was, that Diarmaid had given judgment against Columba in a dispute between him and Finnian of Moyville as to the possession of a copy of the Psalter,[1] which Columba had made without Finnian's permission. This the king had adjudged to Finnian, on the ground of the adage—

"Le Gach boin a boinin,"
"To every cow belongs its calf;"

and therefore to every book belongs its son-book or copy. Against this decision Columba protested, and is represented as having incited his tribe of

[1] This Psalter was ever after known as the 'Cathach,' 'the Book of Battle,' and was preserved for years in the family of O'Donnell. It is now in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy.—See Reeve's 'Adamnan,' p. 249; 'Annals of the Four Masters,' i. 193.

the northern Hy Niall to avenge him upon the king of Ireland, and by his prayers to have contributed to their success. A synod, so the story proceeds, was now held at Teltown, in Meath, and it was agreed that Columba, as a "man of blood," must leave Ireland and win from heathenism as many souls as he had been the cause of being slain in battle.

The old Irish *life*, however, knows of no other reason than a purely religious one, "for the love and favour of Christ,"[1] and he doubtless shared the missionary spirit which so deeply characterized the monastic Church of Ireland at this period. At the same time political motives may have partially influenced him. Through his grandmother he was connected with the line of the Dalriadic king, at this time supreme in the north of Ireland, and who had settled an important Irish colony in the west of Scotland. The great pagan nation of the northern Picts had lately inflicted a crushing blow upon this colony, and Columba may have felt that if he succeeded in winning over this heathen tribe to the faith of Christ, he would at the same time be rescuing the Irish colony of Dalriada from a great danger.[2]

[1] All the Adamnan records of his motive is "pro Christo peregrinam colere emigravit."

[2] See Skene's 'Celtic Scotland,' ii. 84.

Whatever may have been his precise motive, certain it is that in the year A.D. 563, Columba, who was now in his forty-second year, having collected twelve companions,[1] took leave of his country, and, sailing in a wicker boat covered with skins for the coast of Argyleshire, landed there on the eve of Pentecost.

The territories of the Dalriadic colony had at this time been much restricted by Pictish invasions, and at the time did not extend much beyond the peninsula of Cantyre and Cowal. His first object was to obtain the grant of some island, where he might found a monastery to form the centre of his great missionary work.

The spot selected was a small island, which bore the name of Ia or Hii,[2] or, as it was known in later times, Icolumkill, "Hy of Colum of the Churches," lying north-east and south-west, and separated from the Ross of Mull by a narrow channel of about a mile broad. In length it was about three miles and a half, and in breadth about a mile and a half. In the centre of the island was a plain extending

[1] For their names see Reeve's 'Adamnan,' pp. 245 and 299.

[2] The name Iona has arisen from a misprint of the word Ioua, the adjective form used by Adamnan, the root of which was Iou. The oldest forms of the name are Hii, Ia, and I. See Reeve's 'Adamnan,' p. ccxvii.

across its narrowest part, apparently fertile and well adapted either for pasture or agriculture. North of this plain was a tract of wilder ground, consisting of small grassy patches or dells, alternating with rocky elevations, and culminating in the highest hill in the island, now called Dunii. South of the plain was a tract of low fertile land, extending along the eastern shore, and sloping gently towards the sea, with a stream trickling through the centre. West of the plain was a natural bulwark of rocky elevations, between which and the sea was the ancient cemetery, where the founders of the Dalriadic colony and their successors, down to his own time, were buried. On the southern shore was a little harbour or landing-place for persons crossing the channel from Mull. It formed the centre of an archipelago of islands: south were Colonsay, Islay, and Jura; east was Mull; north were Coll, Rum, the low shores of Canna, and the Coolin Hills of Skye; west were Tiree and the Skerryvore Islands.

Having obtained a grant of the island either from Conall, the king of Dalriada, or from Brude, the chief of the Picts, he cast anchor on Pentecost Eve in the bay called *Port-a-churich*, and proceeded to erect a monastery on the model of that which he had already built in such numbers in his native land, and which, like many of the island monasteries,

was to consist of one hundred and fifty persons under the monastic rule.

In all that he required of the brethren, Columba himself set an example. Like the first bishop of New Zealand, he had many natural gifts which fitted him for his arduous work. Tall of stature, of a vigorous and athletic frame, with a voice that could be heard at an amazing distance, his noble presence, his frank bearing, and his winning smile, gained the hearts and the confidence of all. Like the same great prelate, he was of an eminently practical turn. There was no emergency in which he could not render aid. He could not only illuminate a service-book, but bale the boat, grind the corn in the hand-mill, administer medicine to the sick, and assist in the labours of the farm.

A description of the island monastery which Columba now founded, and where he resolved to exhibit the Christian life to the observation of the barbaric tribes, amongst whom he had come to labour, will be given in the next chapter. Meanwhile two years seem to have elapsed before he made any attempt to approach the pagan chief of the great nation of the northern Picts. During the interval he devoted himself to the spiritual necessities of the people of the districts of Ardnamurchan and Lochaber.[1]

[1] Adamnan, i. 8; ii. 9, 20, 23, 38.

At length, in the year A.D. 565, he crossed the mountains of Drumalban and made his way to the court of King Brude, situated near the river Ness, not very far from Inverness. Two distinguished helpers accompanied him on this occasion, Comgall of Bangor, and Cainnoch of Achaboe, both of whom belonged to the race of the Irish Picts, and who therefore might be regarded with no unfriendly feelings by the king of the Picts of Scotland. But like the pagan master of the Apostle of Ireland, King Brude was exceedingly loath to meet the strangers, and closed his gates against them. No sooner, however, had Columba made the sign of the cross than the gates were thrown open, and the chief and his councillors advanced to meet the three ecclesiastics with all due respect, and from that day forward held the founder of Iona in the greatest honour, in spite of all the efforts of the Druid priests to put down these new-comers.

The conversion of so powerful a chief as Brude could not fail to exert a great influence over the Pictish nation, and Columba was now enabled to direct with success numerous missionary efforts in the north and east of Scotland. It is to be wished that his biographer had described his tours with greater precision, and so enabled us to realize more completely the spread of his monastic colonies amongst the Pictish tribes, instead of dealing so much

with his miracles, and the angelic manifestations vouchsafed to him.

We gather, however, that he was occupied upwards of nine years in spreading the truth among the subjects of King Brude, and we have traces of his activity, not merely in the neighbourhood of Loch Ness, but in the island of Skye, and the north-western mainland. In the year 574, Conall, king of Dalriada, died, and Columba was now able to prove the ascendency he had gained in the country, by consecrating his cousin and successor Aidan in the newly-established monastery of Iona, and thus gaining for him the rank of an independent king over the whole of the Dalriadic territories.

A solemn synod, convened in 575 by the king of Ireland at Drumceatt, in the county of Londonderry, afforded him a convenient opportunity of securing his object, and of making his appearance there as imposing as possible. To the convention, therefore, of all the petty kings and heads of tribes he proceeded with twenty bishops, forty priests, fifty deacons, and thirty of his "alumni" or students, whom he had doubtless collected, not merely from Iona, but from his numerous monasteries throughout Ireland.

Two important points had to be discussed.

The first was, how far the colony of Dalriada, now that Aidan had been solemnly inaugurated as king,

should be deemed independent of the sovereign of Ireland, or whether it should be considered liable to the same burdens as were exacted from all other petty principalities; such as rent and tribute, and military service. At first the point was referred to the decision of Columba himself, but he declined to give an opinion himself, and referred the assembled chiefs to Colman, son of Comgellan, who belonged to Dalriada. He decided that the kingdom of Dalriada, in Scotland, should be free from all tribute to the king of Ireland, but should be expected to join in all expeditions except those by sea. This seemed an independent position to Aidan, which Columba had little difficulty afterwards in persuading the king of the northern Picts to respect.

The second subject of discussion was the overgrown power and the increasing exactions of the bardic order. The people never tired of listening to the songs of the bards, and their praises of the heroic deeds of some national hero, and the bards, strong in their numbers and the affection of the people, did not scruple to defame or lampoon any who annoyed them, or opposed the right to costly presents which they exacted from the tribes for themselves and their numerous retinue.[1] The consequence

[1] There used to be thirty in the company of each *ollamh* or chief bard, and fifteen in the company of each *anrud*, or poet of the second rank.

was, that many of the influential chiefs clamoured for the suppression of the order, and their banishment from the kingdom altogether. A poet himself, Columba ventured to intercede in their behalf, and succeeded in getting their sentence of banishment revoked, on condition that their retinue should be reduced, and that they should be placed in future under stricter control. After some dispute, this proposal was adopted, and out of gratitude for his exertions in behalf of the order, the chief *Ollamh* of Erin composed the poem called the *Amhra Columcille*, or "praise of Columba."

When the council broke up, Columba occupied himself for some time in visiting the various religious houses which he had founded, and on his return to Iona, experienced, in the development of his plans, the authority and influence he had acquired both in Ireland and Scotland. The island monastery of Hy was now regarded as the mother-church of the numerous foundations in Ireland, Dalriadic Scotland, and Pictland, which now became subject to her jurisdiction, while their members constituted the great "family of Iona," which soon extended far and wide.

For, committing themselves to their boats of skin, the disciples of Columba braved the perils of the seas, and formed monasteries on the island of Tiree,

the *Tireth*, or "land of corn"; on the Garveloch Isles, in the centre of the channel which separates the island of Mull from the mainland of Lorn;[1] on Inchkenneth at the west of the same island, on Isla, at Movern, Canna, and Skye. Others were founded at Lismore, in the island of Bute, in "Coll Egg," and other isles, the "Polynesia" of the sixth and seventh centuries. Of the monasteries founded in the Pictish territories the biographer of Columba has not mentioned even the names, but the traditions of Aberdour in Banffshire, and of Deer in the district of Buchan, prove that they extended to the shores of the Eastern Sea.

In A.D. 584 he was enabled to direct his energies towards a more southern field. In this year his friend and patron King Brude died, and was succeeded by Gartnaidh, who belonged to the nation of the southern Picts, and whose royal residence was at Abernethy, on the southern bank of the Tay. The southern Picts had been won over to Christianity early in the previous century by Ninian, but their new faith had no permanent hold over them, and they gradually

[1] "The most westerly of the four islands which constitute this group is termed Elachnave or *Eilean na Naomh*, or the 'Island of Saints,' on the west side of which is a sheltered bay, where is a fountain called 'St. Columcille's Well.'"—Skene's 'Celtic Scotland,' ii. 128.

relapsed into heathenism. The new king now founded, with the help of Columba, a new monastic church, where the earlier church had been, at Abernethy; and the "Apostle of Scotland," with the help of some of his Pictish friends and disciples, was enabled to provide for the extension of the "family of Iona," on the south-eastern shores of Forfar and Fife.

After thus labouring for some time Columba once more repaired to Ireland, and visited the brethren who dwelt in the now celebrated monastery of Clonmachin. His reception attests the regard in which he was now held. "As soon as it was known that he was near," writes his biographer, "all flocked forth from their little grange farms near the monastery, and, together with the brethren, ranged themselves with enthusiasm under the Abbot Alither. Then advancing beyond the inclosure of the monastery, they went out as one man to meet Columba, as if he were an angel of the Lord, and humbly bowed before him, with their faces to the ground. Then kissing him reverently, and singing hymns of praise as they passed along, they conducted him with all honour to the church, while four men walked by his side and held a canopy of wood over him, lest he should be troubled by the crowd thronging around him.

His last voyage to his island home was not unattended with danger. Off the coast of Antrim his

boat was caught in the eddies of "Brecan's Cauldron," and he was nearly being swallowed up in this "Gulp of the Sea," as the natives called it.

Safe once more in Hy, he busied himself with the extension of his missionary work, and the completion of thirty years of labour in A.D. 593 seems to have given him a foreboding of the coming close. But four more years were allowed him to work for his Divine Master, and these were devoted by him to reading, study, and prayer; and then, in A.D. 597, when he had reached his seventy-seventh year, the end came.

It was at the end of May, in this year, that, worn with age, he was conveyed in a car to visit some of the brethren who were working on the western part of the island. "I could have desired, my brethren," said he, "to have departed during our Paschal solemnities this last April. But lest sorrow should dim the joy of so festive a season, my departure hath been deferred." These words caused no little pain to those who heard them, for they knew what must be surely coming. Then turning his face to the east, the saint blessed the island and all who dwelt upon it, and was carried back to his cell. On the following Sunday, the 2nd of June, he celebrated the Holy Eucharist, and was filled with a strong presentiment that the following Saturday was to be his last day on earth.

Accordingly, on that day he called to him his attendant Diormet, and said to him, "This day is called, in the sacred Scriptures, *Sabbatum*, or *Rest;* and truly will it be a day of rest to me; for this day shall I bid farewell to the toils of life, and this night I shall go the way of my fathers, for Christ already calleth me, and thus it hath been revealed unto me."

Together the two then advanced towards the barn where the corn was stored, and the saint thanked God that, for another year, He had provided for the wants of the brotherhood. Then they passed on towards a little hill which stood above the monastery, and there, lifting up his hands to heaven, Columba bestowed upon it his last blessing. Descending, he entered his cell, and began to transcribe the thirty-fourth psalm.[1] He wrote as far as the words in the eleventh verse: "*They who seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good.*" There he stopped and laid down his pen, saying, "I think I shall write no more; the next words, '*Come, ye children, hearken unto me,*' belong rather to Baithen, my successor, than to me."

Then he rose and went to vespers, and returning to his cell spent the night reclining on his stone pillow, and exhorting his disciples, as his last legacy,

[1] The thirty-third in the Vulgate.

to peace and goodwill. The hours of the short summer night wore on, and at twelve the bell rang for matins. Rising hastily, Columba proceeded towards the church, and, entering alone, knelt down before the altar in prayer. Diormet followed, and cried, "Where art thou, father?" for the lights had not yet been brought in by the brethren, and it was still dark. Groping his way, he found the saint lying before the altar, and raising him a little, laid his head upon his breast. The rest of the brethren had now entered, and seeing what was rapidly drawing nigh, burst into lamentation. But Columba looked upon them with cheerfulness, and, aided by Diormet, tried to raise his right hand, and to pronounce his last blessing. But his voice failed him, and he was fain to move his hand as best he was able, and so breathed his last, on the morning of Sunday, June the 9th, A.D. 597.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MONASTIC CHURCH OF IONA.

THE Columbian monastic system presents so many features of interest that it may be well to devote to it a somewhat extended notice.[1]

The Columbian brethren, then, regarded themselves as "*Soldiers of Christ*," and each one professed his readiness to offer himself as a living sacrifice to God, by withdrawing from the cares of the world, and spending his life in the propagation of the Gospel.

The society consisted of an Abbot and Family. The Abbot, also called "father," or "holy father," or, in the case of a founder, "the patron," had his seat at the mother-church, which was situate at Hy. His jurisdiction, however, extended equally over the affiliated churches, which either he himself in person or his disciples founded in Ireland or in Scotland, and he had the power of regulating their affairs, and gave his instructions to their respective superiors.

[1] See Dr. Reeve's edition of Adamnan's 'Life of Columba,' in which all that is known of the subject is given with the utmost fulness, and an accuracy and critical judgment beyond all praise.

In ecclesiastical rank he was a presbyter, and officiated at the altar, and pronounced absolution, but he was not a bishop, and was emphatically styled *abbas et presbyter*. This, as we shall see below, did not imply any usurpation or disregard of the episcopal office, the essential functions of which were always scrupulously maintained.

The power of the abbot was absolute. He could institute a festival, publish a holiday, dispense with a fast, relieve penitential discipline or regulate its intensity; He could give leave to a brother to depart from the island, or forbid his coming to it, or despatch him to some distant mission. When at home he was attended by some of the brethren, except when he expressed a wish to be alone. When abroad he was attended by a party who were styled his "companions," and if occasion offered, he preached and baptized.

The family, vernacularly called "*muintir*," consisted of "brethren," whom the former endearingly addressed as his "children." At first they were, as we have seen, twelve in number, and natives of Ireland. But before long the society increased, and included Britons and Saxons. They took a solemn monastic vow on bended knees in the oratory, and were tonsured from ear to ear,—that is, the fore part of the head was made bare, and the hair was allowed

to grow only on the back part of the head. They consisted of three classes. Those of advanced years and tried devotedness were called "seniors." Those who were stronger and fitter for labour were termed the working brothers. The third class consisted of the youth who were under instruction, and were termed "juniors" or "pupils." Besides the professed members, there were generally a number of strangers loosely connected with the community, who were sometimes called "proselytes," or "penitents," or guests, whose sojourn on the island was of varied length.

The measure of obedience demanded of the brethren is defined to be "*usque ad mortem*," even unto death. Hence they were ever ready, on the shortest notice, to go forth on a journey however long and wearisome, or on a voyage however distant and perilous, or to submit to exposure in hard out-door work, at the desire of the superior, in the most inclement weather.

The members had all things in common. Personal property was absolutely disclaimed, according to Columba's rule, "Be always naked, in imitation of Christ, and in obedience to the precepts of the Gospel." Celibacy was strictly enjoined upon them, and humility was ever held up as a special grace to be aimed at and exemplified in demeanour towards

superiors, and in dejection after penitence for sin. Hospitality was developed in Hy in the fulness of national generosity. When an expected guest arrived, the abbot and his brethren went forth to meet him, and bid him welcome. He was conducted to the oratory, and thanks returned for his safety. Thence he was led to a lodging, and water prepared to wash his feet. If he chanced to arrive on an ordinary fast day, the fast was relaxed in his favour. Almsgiving was held in high esteem, but itinerant beggars, who went about with wallets, were not regarded with favour.

With regard to Divine worship, the days of the year were either ordinary or festival days, and a daily service was the general monastic practice. The brethren were summoned to the oratory by the sound of a bell, and repaired thither, sometimes in attendance on the abbot, sometimes with less regularity. At night they carried lanterns with them. The bretheren who were employed on the farm, were not required to attend at the daily service. The festival days were the Lord's-day, and the Feasts of the Saints, and were celebrated by rest from labour, the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and the use of better food. The stated services were Prime, Tierce, Sext, and probably None, but the chief service was the celebration, sometimes at Prime or at Sext, when

the Cantores chanted the wonted office of "the Sacred Mysteries of the Eucharist," or the "Mysteries of the Sacred Oblation." For this service wine and water were used,[1] which were drawn by the deacon and set down in a vessel, and bread. He first consecrated the elements standing before the altar. When several priests were present, one was selected for the office, who might invite a brother priest to break bread with him in token of equality. When a bishop officiated, he broke the bread alone, in token of his superior office. Then the brethren approached and partook of the Eucharist. The chief festival was the Paschal solemnity, or Easter, and the season was regarded as one of special joy and thankfulness. The period which elapsed between Easter-day and Whitsun-day was called "the Paschal Days," and it was the term of the greatest indulgence during the year. Christmas-day was another social festival, for which some made preparation during the forty days immediately preceding.

Columba laid down special rules with respect to the discipline to which his communities were subjected. Every Wednesday and Friday throughout the year, except in the interval between Easter and Whitsun-day, was a fast-day. Lent was strictly observed as a preparation for Easter, and during this season the fast was prolonged every day except

[1] Adamnan, 'Vita,' ii. 1.

Sunday till evening, when a light meal, consisting of such food as bread, diluted milk, and eggs, was taken. Those who practised extreme asceticism added the strange custom of passing a certain time with the body entirely immersed in water, and in that condition of reciting the whole, or part, of the Psalter. When any one, whether lay or cleric, desired to enter upon a special course of discipline, it was usual to depute some distinguished saint as his *Anmchara*, soul-friend, or spiritual director, under whose direction it was fulfilled. After the commission of any offence, the penitent was required, in the presence of all, to confess his sins, generally on his knees, and to promise amendment. This done, the abbot either absolved him on the spot, or enjoined the observance of a more lengthened period of discipline. The biographer of Columba records two instances of this severe discipline. In one, the penitent, who had assumed the clerical habit, was ordered to do penance for seven years in the island of Tiree, and completed his period of seclusion in the monastery of Magh Lunge, in that island. In another case a sentence of perpetual exile from his native land was imposed upon a guilty brother, and a penance, in tears, lamentations, for twelve years among the Britons.

The sign of the Cross was very generally used as "a saving sign." Tools were crossed before using

them, the pail was crossed before milking. The sign of the Cross was deemed effectual to accomplish many results. It would banish demons, restrain river monsters, unlock a door, lay low a wild beast. Hence the readiness to erect the banner of the Cross on the site of any remarkable occurrence, a tendency which afterwards received a complete development, when the island of Hy became celebrated for its three hundred and sixty crosses. Even at sea the cruciform arrangement of the masts and yards was regarded as boding well for a favourable voyage.

The sacrament of Baptism was administered to adult converts, after due instruction in the faith. Sometimes, on his missionary travels, the abbot would administer it to a whole family, sometimes to an individual a short while before death.

Holy orders could be conferred only by a bishop. Young men were admitted to the diaconate while students, and it was part of their duty to wait upon the priests at the altar. Priests' orders were conferred by the bishop, but the previous imposition of the abbot's right hand was deemed essential as the bishop's warrant for his interference.[1] When Finian consecrated Cedd, he called two other bishops to his assistance, and when Cedd was consecrated by Wini,

[1] Adamnan, 'Vita,' i. 29.

we find that two bishops took part in the ceremony.[1] Cases where the services of one bishop were judged sufficient were not without precedent. Even Columba himself is represented in the legends as having been sent to Bishop Etchen to receive from him episcopal orders, and it was only owing to a mistake that the order of priest only was conferred upon him. As late as A.D. 1076 we find Lanfranc complaining of single episcopal ordination as a practice existing in Ireland, and Anselm repeats the charge in A.D. 1100.

The burial of the dead was regarded in the Columbian monasteries as a solemn religious duty involving regard alike to the present and to the future. After death the body was laid out in the cell, wrapt in linen cloths. There it remained for three days and nights, during the obsequies, which were celebrated with all due honour and reverence, and the chanting of Psalms. It was then wrapt in a clean shroud of fine linen, and being placed in a coffin prepared for it, was borne to the grave, in solemn procession, and buried amongst the members of the society. The employment of the community, besides the daily religious services, included reading, writing, and labour. This was in accordance with the example of the founder, who allowed no time to pass in which

[1] Bede, 'H. E.,' iii. 22, 28.

he was not occupied in prayer, or reading, or writing, or some other employment.

The Holy Scriptures naturally formed the primary subject of study, alike with the abbot and the youngest members of the society. The Psalter received especial attention, and the brethren were required to commit the whole or large portions to memory.

Besides the Holy Scriptures, the Latin and Greek languages, and ecclesiastical writings were made subjects of study.

The two extant Latin works of the biographer of Columba give proof of his classical attainments, and Cummian's Paschal Epistle is a striking specimen of the ecclesiastical learning of the day.

Scarcely any occupation was deemed of greater importance by the brethren than that of writing. Columba himself was much devoted to it, and many of his books were preserved with great care.[1]

The necessity of supplying service-books for the numerous churches that rapidly sprang up, increased the need for this occupation. Many of these, doubtless, were without much embellishment, but great labour was bestowed on the ornamentation of some manuscripts, especially of the Scriptures, and the books of Kells and Durrow are remarkable specimens of

[1] 'Columbæ Vita,' ii. 8.

the conception, skill, and patience of the Columbian scribes in the seventh century.

The stated labour in the various communities was agriculture in its various branches, and the keeping of cattle, to which we must add the preparing of food and the manufacture of the various articles required for personal or domestic use. Amongst these the biographer of Columba mentions the *Pincerna*, or butler, to whose charge the refectory and its appointments were committed, and the *Pistor*, or baker.

The ordinary food was of the simplest description, consisting of bread, sometimes made of barley, milk, fish, eggs, and probably seal's flesh. On Sundays and on High Festivals, or on the arrival of guests, there was an improvement of the diet, and amongst the additions made to the principal meal, we find fresh meat served up—as mutton, or even beef. The rule of Columba, which is little more than a record of the observance of Bangor, seems to recognize but one meal, and that in the evening. In practice, however, his rule appears to have resembled that of St. Benedict, which allowed dinner at twelve, and supper in the evening, every day between Easter and Pentecost; and after Pentecost on every day, except Wednesdays and Fridays, when the first meal was taken at *Nona*. From the middle of September till the beginning of Lent the first meal was taken con

tinually after *Nona;* and during Lent only, the first meal was delayed till the last light of day.

The ordinary garments worn were two: the *cuculla*, or cowl, of coarse texture made of wool, and of the natural colour of the material; and the *tunica*, an under garment, which was usually white. The *cuculla* consisted of the body and the hood, the latter of which was sometimes termed the *casula*. Instead of these, in rough weather, a warmer garment was worn. When working or travelling, the brethren wore sandals, which they were in the habit of removing before they sat down to meals. When the weather was more than ordinarily severe, or the labour had been specially hard, the Superior allowed the labourers to rest for a space. The brethren slept on beds, which were distributed through the several cells. Each bed was provided with a pallet, probably of straw, and a pillow. Coverlets were seldom required, for the brethren generally slept in their clothes.

The original buildings at Hy were of the simplest character, and consisted of a number of small wattle-built huts surrounding a green court, and protected by a *vallum*, or rampart.

The most important building was the oratory or church. Attached to it on one side, and communicating with it by a door, was the sacristy, where the

bell was kept which summoned the brethren to the sacred offices.

The other buildings included a dwelling-house for the abbot, another for the entertainment of strangers, a refectory and kitchen, a byre for the cows, a barn, a storehouse for the grain, and other out-buildings. There was also, most likely, a chamber for the preservation of the books, and other literary apparatus, such as waxed tablets, styles, pens, and ink-horns. The books, at least those which were intended for carriage, were suspended in leathern satchels from the walls. Among these were the sacred volumes of the Old and New Testaments, in the form of a Bibliotheca, or Bible, ecclesiastical writings, and profane authors.

Within the enclosure, which was either of earth or composed of mixed earth and stones, were the lodgings or cells of the community. They appear to have been detached huts, originally formed of wattles or of wood. The abbot's house stood at some distance from the others; it was built with joists, and was situated on an eminence Here the founder sat, and wrote, or read, having one attendant, who occasionally read to him, while two stood at the door awaiting his orders. Inside the rampart there was also a smithy, and of necessity a carpenter's workshop, where the timber so generally used was fashioned and

prepared. Near the beach, also, there seems to have been another, for large beams of timber in a rough state were sometimes floated from the mainland to the island, and fashioned there into boats.

Outside the rampart were the byre with its cows, the granary with its grain, the mill with its mill-stream, the stable with its horse and cart, and the harbour with its craft of various sizes. A stream which flows eastward, a little to the north of the monastery, is still called Struth-a-mhuilinn, or the "mill-stream." It rises in a bog called the *Lochan-mor*, or "Great Lakelet," which may have served as a mill-pond. The stream is small now, because the bog is nearly drained. In Columba's time the quern was probably the only mill in use, for this was the grinding-apparatus of the school where he was taught.

The land on the east side of the island seems to have been used chiefly for pasture, while the tillage was carried on in the more productive plain on the west. Thither in harvest-time the reapers repaired in the morning, and thence they returned in the evening, carrying loads of corn on their backs to the monastery, though we also find them using wains furnished with wheels.

The geographical situation of Hy required the brethren to show a proficiency in navigation, and an ability to construct vessels of various sizes. Of these, some

were made of wood, others of wicker-work, covered with hides; these latter, small portable boats, were used chiefly for crossing rivers or inland lochs. The larger vessels were so constructed as to be capable of being served either by wind or oar, and were formed to hold a crew, of whom some were monks and others not. The chief landing-places were on the east and south.[1]

[1] "The names of the little bays on the east coast are indicative of frequent resort to the island: *Port-na-Mairtear*, 'Martyr's Bay;' *Port-Ronain*, 'Ronan's Bay;' *Port-an-Diseart*, 'Hermitage Bay;' *Port-na-muinntir*, 'People's Bay,' tell their own history."—Reeve's 'Adamnan," p. cxxii.

CHAPTER IX.

THE APOSTLE OF STRATHCLYDE.

WE have seen above[1] that the Christians in Scotland, in the time of the Romans, had serving amongst them a bishop named St. Ninian. But however it may have been before, certain it is, that after the departure of the Imperial legions, Christianity had not sufficient vitality to maintain itself, or push forward its influence during the troubled period that followed. A considerable portion, indeed, of the Roman provinces was not permanently won over to the Christian Church until it was evangelized by missionaries from the Saxon side, by St. Cuthbert[2] and his followers.

An earlier pioneer, however, preceded him, and did good work. As Columba was the founder of the Christian Church among the Northern Picts, so Kentigern, or, as he is otherwise known, St. Mungo, was the chief agent in the planting of the Christian Church in Cumbria, or Strathclyde.

[1] See p. 108.

[2] See 'Conversion of the English,' chap. viii.

The life of Kentigern was written by Jocelyn of Furness, about the year A.D. 1180, but purports to have been founded on earlier legends, and especially a document written in Irish.[1] Thus a long interval separates the saint from his biographer, and the work does not give us those glimpses of ecclesiastical customs and domestic life, which, though far scantier than one could wish, light up the chronicles of Columba.

The grandfather of Kentigern is said to have been a king in Cumbria or Strathclyde, and by religion a heathen. His mother is represented as having been a believer in Christianity, but not baptized. Rejecting the hand of a suitor, Ewen, the son of Enwegende, of noble lineage, she sought to imitate the virginal honour of the Blessed Virgin. But becoming with child by her lover against her will, she was ordered by the king to be stoned, according to the laws of the country, and when the royal officers shrank from executing the command, he directed that she should be exposed in the sea, saying, "If she be worthy of life, her God will free her, if He wills, from the peril of death." Accordingly, she was brought to the frith, which is about three miles from Kepduf, to the

[1] See the late Bishop of Brechin's edition of the 'Life of St. Kentigern,' in the fifth volume of the 'Historians of Scotland.'

mouth of the river Aberlady, and there put out in a boat made of hides, which carried her into deep water beyond the Isle of May. All night she remained alone in the open sea, and when morning dawned she was cast in safety on the sand at Culross, on the north shore of the Frith of Forth. On landing, the pains of labour came upon her. Dragging herself to a place where some shepherds had lighted a fire, she succeeded in rekindling it, and then gave birth to a son. Some of the herdsmen are said to have found her there with the child; and while some gave her food, others went to "a disciple of Palladius," whom tradition,—making little of an unfortunate anachronism of two centuries,[1]—has identified with the blessed Servanus or St. Serf, at that time "teaching the Christian law to his clerics." On seeing the child, the holy man, whoever he was, exclaimed, in the language of his country, *Mochohe, mochohe*, which, in Latin, means "Care mi," "Care mi," and straightway nourished both mother and child as if they were his own kin; and after certain days baptized them both, calling the mother *Tanen*, and the child *Kyentyern*, which is the Welsh form of his name, which was *Cyndeyrn*, from *Cyn*, chief, and *Teyrn*, lord.

Growing rapidly in knowledge and all good gifts,

[1] See Skene's 'Celtic Scotland,' ii. 184.

the boy so endeared himself to his protector that he was accustomed to call him in his native tongue "Munghu," "the dear friend," from the Welsh *Mwyn*, "mild, gentle," and *cu* or *ghu*, "dear," the name which he bears in Glasgow to this day. The armorial bearings of the city of Glasgow perpetuate three renowned miracles of St. Kentigern, one of which represents the cause that induced him to leave the place of his nativity, and seek another home. On a shield argent is a robin-redbreast. This robin was wont to sit and sing upon St. Serf's shoulder, but the boys in his school are said to have pulled off its head, and then, envying his virtues and his learning, to have thrown it into the lap of Kentigern. St. Serf approached with his avenging rod, when suddenly, so the story runs, in vindication of the boy's latent sanctity, the bird gathered together its limbs, flapped its wings, and began singing!

At length, unable to endure any longer the jealousy of his fellow-students he left his home, and crossing the estuary of the Forth, reached "Cathures, which is now called Glasgow," where he was on the scene of the former labours of St. Ninian. Here he settled down, and lived for some time, and, in the words of the Chronicler, the king and clergy of the region of Cumbria, albeit they were few in number, came together, and after diligently considering what was

best to be done for the good of the Church, which was well-nigh destroyed, "they, with one consent, approached Kentigern, and elected him, in spite of his many remonstrances and strong resistance, to be the shepherd and bishop of their souls."[1]

According to Jocelyn, Kentigern was consecrated by a prelate who had been sent over from Ireland for this purpose, and in the neighbourhood of Glasgow he laboured for some time to spread the faith in his diocese.

After awhile troubles arose. A chief, by name Morken, ascended the throne of the Cumbrian kingdom, who scorned and despised the doctrines that Kentigern preached, and resisted his influence. But after the saint had effectually opposed all his machinations, the oppressor died, and was buried in the royal town, called after him Thorp Morken. Kentigern was now left for a time at peace to carry on his good work at Glasgow. The death, however, of Morken did not leave him wholly undisturbed. Two of the king's relatives sought how they might lay hold of Kentigern by craft and put him to death. He therefore resolved to leave Cumbria, and proceeded to Menevia in South Wales, where St. David then ruled as bishop. On his way he still employed him-

[1] Jocelyn, 'Vita S. Kentigerni,' cc. i. ii.

self in spreading the faith. At Karleolum, Carlisle, he heard that "there were many among the mountains given to idolatry or ignorant of the divine law." So he turned aside, and was successful in converting many from their strange beliefs; and remaining some time in a thickly-planted place, sought to comfort and confirm in the faith the men that dwelt there, by erecting a cross, whence the place took the name of Crosfield, or Crosthwaite, and was marked in the time of Jocelyn by "a basilica erected to the name of the blessed Kentigern." Turning aside from thence, he directed his steps along the seashore, scattering as he went the seeds of the Divine Word, till at length he reached St. David's.

St. David, as we have already seen,[1] had been himself an eminent founder of the monastic church. Kentigern, therefore, had not been long with him before he applied to the king, whom Jocelyn calls Cathwallain, for a site whereon to build a monastery. The king permitted him to make his own choice, and Kentigern with a numerous retinue "went round the land, and walked throughout it, exploring the situation of the localities, the quality of the air, the richness of the soil, the sufficiency of the meadows, pastures, and woods, and finally reached a place on the border of a

[1] See above, p. 60.

river which is called the Elwy, where he commenced to build a monastery. The work was distributed in varied proportions amongst his followers. Some levelled the ground and cleared the forest; others dug the foundations and fitted the trees together, as Kentigern directed them, to form a church of wood, "after the fashion of the Britons, seeing they could not yet build of stone, nor were so wont to do."[1] This is the famous monastery of Llanelwy, afterwards called St. Asaph's. It is situated in the valley of the Clwyd, at the point where the river Elwy joins the Clwyd. The name was possibly given to it by Kentigern from some fancied resemblance to the river and valley in the north, where he had his original seat, and the Red Book of St. Asaph records several grants made to him by Maelgwyn Gwynedd, the king at this time of North Wales.[2]

[1] Jocelyn, 'Vita S. Kentigerni,' cap. xxiv.

[2] Maelgwyn, a powerful North Welsh king, is said to have given Cyndeyrn the land by the Elwy, and here the institution he founded soon attained a high repute. "Partaking of the nature of a missionary colony, something like the universities' mission to Central Africa, and combining in its scheme not only the offices of religion, but also the several duties of education, husbandry, and handicraft, it drew together a large number of members. The privilege of sanctuary, too, which extended a mile each way in length and breadth, was an additional attraction." Those of the number who had to conduct Divine worship, are said, as at Bangor-Iscoed, to have had the twenty-four

The account of this foundation illustrates the political and religious nature of the enormous Welsh and Scotic abbacies, and may be taken as a type of the larger Celtic monasteries. "There flocked," we read, "to the monastery, old and young, rich and poor, to take upon themselves the easy yoke and light burden of the Lord. Nobles and men of the middle class brought to the saint their children to be trained and educated. The tale of those who renounced the world increased day by day both in number and importance, so that the total number of those enlisted in God's army amounted to nine hundred and sixty-five, professing in act and habit the life of monastic rule, according to the institution of the holy man. He

hours so allotted among them, that some were always engaged in the performance of religious service. "Besides this, they would follow the common practice of the Church at the time, and extend their missionary labours over the surrounding district, either setting up a cross to mark their stations, or else taking advantage of the periodical gatherings of the people at the wells, which they gradually appropriated to Christian men." One of the ablest and the most popular of the disciples of Kentigern was a native of North Wales, named Asa, or Asaph. On the recall of his master to resume the direction of his diocese in Strathclyde, he was appointed to succeed him. He was a great benefactor of the see, the cathedral city of which took its name from him instead of from Kentigern. Many spots bear his name, such as Llan-asa (his *church*), Ffynnon-asa (his *well*), Onen-asa (his *ash*), Pant-asa (his *hollow*).—Thomas's 'History of the Diocese of St. Asaph,' p. 55.

divided this troop that had been collected together into a threefold division of religious observance. Three hundred, who were unlettered, he appointed to the duty of agriculture, the care of the cattle, and the other necessary duties outside the monastery. He assigned another three hundred to duties within the enclosure of the monastery, such as doing the ordinary work, preparing food, and building workshops. The remaining three hundred and sixty-five, who were lettered, he appointed to the celebration of divine service in church by day and by night; and he seldom allowed any of these to go forth out of the sanctuary, but they were ever to abide within, as if in the holy place of the Lord. But those who were more advanced in wisdom and holiness, and who were fitted to teach others, he was accustomed to take along with him, when, at the urgent demand either of necessity or reason, he thought to go forth to perform his episcopal office."[1] The numbers, it has been observed, in the second and third of these divisions may be exaggerated, but as a whole we have in the narrative a correct picture of the early Irish and Welsh monasteries, when the head of the monastery was also a bishop.

Meanwhile there had been a great change in

[1] 'Vita S. Kentigerni,' cap. xxv.

Cumbria. A new king had risen, named Rederech, who had been baptized in Ireland by the disciples of St. Patrick. Bent on restoring the Gospel to his benighted subjects, he resolved to send messengers to Kentigern, and invite him back to his kingdom. This was in A.D. 573. Kentigern received the message with favour, and having appointed Asaph, one of his monks, his successor, he left him in possession of the see; and forasmuch as he was about to encounter a northern foe, went forth from the church by the north door. After he had departed the door was closed, and all who heard of his going forth lamented his departure with great grief and sorrow. Hence grew up a custom in that church that that door should never be opened, save once a year, on the day of St. Asaph, that is, the 1st of May.

With a numerous retinue of the brethren, who left St. Asaph to accompany him towards the north, he set out, and met King Rederech at a place called Holdelm, now Hoddan, in Dumfriesshire.

An immense multitude assembled to witness the meeting of the king and the bishop, and Kentigern embraced the opportunity of addressing them on the subject of the pagan errors to which many still clung and refused to renounce. How far Jocelyn has drawn from the Irish narrative in the account he gives we cannot tell, but it is curious

as illustrating the sort of paganism which still prevailed. It is a mixture of the old Celtic heathenism and that of their neighbours the Angles, who now were located in the eastern districts of the country. The elements, Kentigern said, which they regarded with superstitious veneration, were in no sense self-originated. They owed their origin to the same great God, Who had made all things for the use and service of men. As to the idols whom they worshipped, they were dead, useless things, fitter far to be burnt than regarded with religious regard. As for Woden, whom their neighbours, the Angles, looked upon as their chief deity, from whom they claimed to derive their origin, and to whom they dedicated the fourth day of the week, he, the bishop asserted, was no other originally than a mortal man, and king of one of the tribes of their forefathers, from whom they and many nations had their descent.

Holdelm, the place where Kentigern met his royal patron and thus addressed the people, was chosen by him as the seat of his episcopal chair for some time, and thence he went forth on many missionary tours among the Picts, and the parts adjacent to his diocese. He also extended his labours to Albania, or the eastern districts of Scotland north of the Frith of Forth, and here he encountered no little danger from the barbarians who opposed

his preaching. But, in spite of everything, he persevered, and though often exposed to death, he never shrank from delivering his testimony to his Lord, and was rewarded by seeing many won from their profane rites, and persuaded to learn a "more acceptable way" of worshipping Him whom they dimly sought after if haply they might find Him. In these regions he also erected many churches, and ordained priests to serve them, from amongst his numerous disciples, as also monasteries, which he committed to the charge .of experienced brethren. Even now traces of his missionary work are to be found "north of the great range of the Mounth, where, in the upper valley of the Dee, on the north side of the river, we find a group of dedications which must have proceeded from a Welsh source. These are Glengairden, dedicated to Mungo, or Kentigern, Migvie and Lumphanan to Finan, the latter name being a corruption of Llanfinan, and Midmar dedicated to Nidan; while in the island of Anglesea we likewise find two adjacent parishes called Llanffinan and Llannidan."[1] This Nidan was a cousin of Kentigern, and thus both are associated with the missionary zeal which reclaimed the country round from heathen errors.

From this successful expedition north of the Forth

[1] Skene's 'Celtic Scotland,' ii. 193.

he returned to his own church of Glasgow, and there continued to superintend the flock over which he had been set. Passing over many marvellous incidents related by Jocelyn, we come to one, which may be considered historical, and which is of especial interest —the meeting of Kentigern with Columba. It appears that during the reign of Rederech there had been friendly intercourse between the disciples of the two saints, and not a few of the brethren of Iona had made their way to Strathclyde. Kentigern would seem to have returned to Glasgow about A.D. 582, and soon after, A.D. 584, Columba was pushing forward his missionary operations about the river Tay. He would thus be at no great distance from the borders of the kingdom of Cumbria, and we learn from Jocelyn that he had often desired to meet the "Apostle of Strathclyde." Accordingly, when the time came, St. Columba went forth, and a numerous array of his disciples and others who desired to look upon the face of so eminent a man. When he drew near the place, called Mellindonor, where the saint abode at this time, he divided all his people into three bands, and sent forward a message to the prelate to tell him of his arrival and of those with him. Kentigern rejoiced when he heard that he was nigh, and he likewise marshalled his spiritual host to meet him. First in the procession advanced the juniors; then those more advanced in years;

thirdly, with himself, walked those well stricken in age, white and hoary and of venerable appearance. And all sang, "*In the ways of the Lord, how great is the glory of the Lord,*" and again they answered, "*The way of the just is made straight, and the path of the Saints prepared.*" The choir of St. Columba sang, "*The Saints shall go from strength; the God of Gods shall appear in Sion. Alleluia.*" Then the two saints met, and mutually embraced and kissed each other, and, in the words of the biographer, "having first filled themselves with the spiritual banquet of divine words, they after that refreshed themselves with bodily food." Then they exchanged crosiers, and we are told that at the commencement of the fifteenth century, Columba's crosier, doubly blessed in the sanctity of the giver and receiver, was to be seen in the reliquary at Ripon in a precious jewelled shrine.

After this interview Kentigern seems to have continued his useful and self-denying labours, presiding over a numerous body of attached followers, and keeping ever burning amidst the wilds of Cumbria the flame of Christian truth. At length, in extreme old age, he judged "from innumerable crevices that the ruin of his earthly tabernacle was imminent," and having exhorted the brethren to mutual love, hospitality, and study, passed away on the octave of the Epiphany, January 13, A.D. 603.

CHAPTER X.

THE DISCIPLES AND SUCCESSORS OF COLUMBA.

THE importance of the influence of the mission of Columba in the conversion of the Celts of Scotland is sufficiently attested by the details of his active career.

But his influence did not close with his life. Fired by his example, and trained under his own eye, his disciples continued to carry on the great work he had bequeathed to them, as the evangelizers of the North.

Despising the terrors of the deep, they guided their frail barks along the western Scottish shores, and visited Shetland, the Faroe Isles, and even the distant and ungenial Iceland, where Celtic tombs and Celtic bones have yielded evidence of their visits.

To Iona, also, we may distinctly trace the mission-abbeys of Brechin and Abernethy, and the monasteries of Melrose, Abercorn, and Coldingham, which became the centres of Christian extension among the Northumbrian kingdoms.

Shut out by a barrier of Arianism, no less than by the physical barrier of the Alps, from the influence of the

great Church on the banks of the Tiber, and unaffected, at least for many years, by the Teutonic invasions which devastated the English shores, the Columbian monasteries, safe in their seclusion, attracted pupils to their schools from every part of Europe, and furnished hosts of missionaries, ready, at a moment's notice, to go forth wherever and whenever an opening was presented for their labours.

(i.) Conspicuous amongst these disciples of Columba was Cormac, whose clan name was Ua Liathain, and who claimed descent from one of the kings of Munster. He had a great fondness for the sea, and repeatedly sailed from Ireland to visit his friends in Iona. It was customary with those members of the society who desired to follow a more ascetic life than that of the rest of the brethren, to withdraw to a solitary place in the neighbourhood of the monastery, where they could enjoy undisturbed meditation, without breaking the bond of the brotherhood. The abode of such was called a *disert*, from the Latin *desertum*. There was a *disert* beside the monastery of Derry, and that belonging to Hy was situated near the shore, in the low ground, north of the present remains of the cathedral, as may be inferred from *Port-an-Diseart*, the name of a little bay in this neighbourhood.

Such a *disert* did not satisfy the aspirations of

Cormac. He longed to discover one somewhere in the ocean. Three times he set forth on the search, and each time without success.[1] On the second of these two occasions Columba was staying, during one of his missionary journeys, at the court of Brude, king of the Picts, "beyond the back of Britain," or the Grampian range by the side of the Ness. Staying at the same court was the prince of "the Orcadian Islands," or Orkney. Columba took the opportunity of the meeting to desire the Scottish king to enjoin upon the Orcadian prince to give protection to his friend Cormac, who, in his wanderings, was likely to find his way to the Orkney Isles. This Brude appeares to have done, for to his recommendation Cormac owed his life when placed in circumstances of great danger.

On another occasion, during Cormac's absence, the brethren were eagerly conversing about their adventurous friend, and speculating on the probability of his prospering on the voyage. Columba overheard the mention of the name of Cormac, and said to the brethren, "Ye shall see Cormac, about whom you are now speaking, arrive here this very day." After an hour, wonderful to relate, says the biographer, Cormac unexpectedly arrived, and to the delighted surprise of all, proceeded to the oratory to give thanks to God.

[1] 'Vita Columbæ,' i. 6.

But voyages to Iona, and even to the distant Orkneys, did not satisfy him. One summer for fourteen days and as many nights "he sailed," we are told, "with full sails before a south wind, in a straight course from land," into the northern regions, and his voyage seemed to be extended beyond the limits of human wanderings, and return to be impossible.[1] It is supposed that he must have pushed forward well nigh as far as Iceland. But after the tenth hour of the fourteenth day dangers of the most formidable kind presented themselves. Sea monsters of hideous and unknown form, such as had never been seen before, struck the keel and sides, the prow and stern of the vessel so violently, that it seemed as if they would wholly penetrate the leathern covering of the ship. But at the very hour when Cormac was in extremest need, Columba, we are assured, conscious of his danger, invited the brethren to earnest prayer for his deliverance, and after some days Cormac's vessel was enabled to regain the land, and he hastened to meet Columba, and "in God's bounty they looked on each other again face to face, to the extreme joy and surprise of all."

It is not to be wondered at that this intrepid voyager became known as "Cormac of the Sea," for

[1] 'Vita S. Columbæ,' ii. 43.

it required no ordinary courage to guide a coracle made up of skins, stretched on a skeleton of wood, in such unknown deeps. He is one of the many Irish ecclesiastics whose name has become domesticated in Scotland,[1] and connected with his residence in the country there are some remains which may be contemporary with the time of Columba. A little way off from the shore of South Knapdale, in Argyleshire, opposite to the old church of Kilmory, is a small bare inland, called "Ellan Moir Vic O'Chormoig," which is rendered "the island of the great Cormac." In the centre of it is an old ecclesiastical building, in which there is a piece of stonework that might almost escape observation. "It consists of two thick walls within a cleft, the sides of which partly support them. These walls are built with much pains, of thin slabs of stone without cement. There is no arch or roof over them, but the top could have been easily covered by beams and turf, and there is a square-topped entrance-door. At the end of this primitive building is a deep narrow cavern of the kind used by the early anchorites." The whole may be of any antiquity, and it is quite within the bounds of probability that one of Columba's companions dwelt there.

[1] Hill Burton's 'History of Scotland,' i. 260.

(ii.) Another illustrious companion of the founder of Iona was St. Donnar, who is called in the collect to his service in the Priory of Aberdeen, "Confessor and Abbot." He was younger than St. Columba, and probably followed him from Ireland, as he is not found in the list of his companions. He is said to have gone to the saint with a request that he would condescend to be his "soul's friend," or spiritual director. This the saint declined, on the plea that he could not be "soul's friend" to the heirs of red martyrdom, that is, to St. Donnar and his companions.

He was thus warned that he was to expect martyrdom, and so it befell. He made his way to Eigg, a small island of the Hebrides, north of Iona, conspicuous for the lofty basaltic peak called the Scuir of Eigg. Fifty disciples accompanied him. Arrived at the island, they took up their abode in a place where the sheep of the queen, or female chief of the country, were kept. This was told to her, and she instantly ordered them to be put to death. Mass had begun when the murderers arrived, apparently on Easter eve, and the request was made that they would wait till the celebration of the Holy Mysteries was ended. Accordingly they paused till the Divine office was concluded, and then put the whole company to the sword.

In the course of time the island again became a religious abode, and the Irish calendars record the names of *Conan Aego*, "Conan of Eig"; *Bercan Aego*, "Berchan of Eig"; *Enan insi Aego*, "Enan of the island Eig"; *Conghalach o Ard Aego*, "Conghalach of Ard-Eig." Of the subsequent history of the island little more is known than the names and dates of occasional possessors till we come to the year 703, when we read in Martin's 'Wanderings in the Western Isles':—"There is a Church here on the East side of the Isle, Dedicated to St. Donnan, whose Anniversary they observe. About thirty yards from the Church there is a Sepulchral Urn under ground. It is a big Stone hewn to the bottom, about four feet deep, and the Diameter of it is about the same breadth. I caused them to dig the ground about it, and we found a flat thin stone covering the urn. It was almost full of Humane Bones, but no Head among them, and they were fair and dry. I enquir'd of the Natives what had become of the Heads, and they could not tell, but one of them said perhaps their Heads had been cut off with a two-handed Sword, and taken away by the Enemy. Some few paces to the North of the Urn there is a narrow stone passage underground, but how far it reaches they could give me no account. The Natives do not call this isle by its ordinary name of Egg when they are at sea, but Island *Nim-Ban-*

More, i.e., the island of the big Women. *St. Donnan's Well*, which is in the South-West End, is in great esteem by the Natives, for *St. Donnan* is the Celebrated Tutelar of this Isle."[1]

There are other places among the Western isles and highlands named Kildonan, dedicated to the memory of the martyr. One is in Sutherland, adjoining Caithness, and gives name to the parish of *Kildonan*. In this parish there was a large hollow stone, situated about three miles from the church, and about midway between it and Helmsdale, which was called *Suigh Donan* by some and *Cathair Donan* by others, *i.e.* "St. Donnan's Seat" or "Resting-place." The tradition is that the saint sat down in it to rest himself when passing through the Strath of Kildonan.

Another church where St. Donnan's memory was held in great veneration was Auchterless, an island parish of Aberdeenshire. Here his pastoral staff was preserved, and was long believed to be efficacious in curing fever and jaundice.[2]

[1] Martin's 'Western Islands,' p. 277.

[2] Besides these principal churches, there were chapels in Scotland where the saint's memory was observed: in Little Bernera, on the west of Lewis; in the parish of Kilpeter, in South Uist; on Little Loch Broom, in the parish of Loch Broom, Rossshire; at Lynedale, in Snizort, a parish of Skye; in Kilchousland, a parish of Cantyre; in Kilmorie, Isle of Arran; in Kirkmaiden, a parish of Wigtonshire; in Colmonel, a parish of Ayrshire.

(iii.) Another follower of Columba has lately been recovered from the darkness of the past. All through Argyleshire are scattered the sites or remain of ecclesiastical buildings, which have names indicating a generic similarity; as Kilmary, Kilmory, Kilmorich, Kilmour, or Kilmoray. Near Applecross, in Ross-shire, is the beautiful mountain lake called Loch Maree, and one amongst its many islands, with many ecclesiastical traditions clustering round it, is Eileen Maree. Still there were, in some instances, faint traditions of an eminent person, who might have been called a saint in olden times, whose memory was connected with some of these spots. So obstinately, indeed, had such a legend attached itself to Loch Maree, and the adjoining Applecross, that in the seventeenth century the ecclesiastical tribunals had a severe conflict to make the people abandon some strange rites for the propitiation of the spirit of the place, rites that, if they were accurately described by the ecclesiastical authorities, partook not merely of the abjured ceremonies of the old Church, but of the incantations and material sacrifices of heathendom.[1]

Irish hagiology has restored the saint to his place in the history of these far back times.

[1] Hill Burton's 'History of Scotland,' i. 261, 262.

His name was Maelrubha, son of Elgana and Subtan, descended on his father's side from Niall the Great, and by his mother from the Dalriadian stock. Through his mother he was also nearly related to St. Comgall, and was born on the 3rd of January, A.D. 642. He received his early education at his kinsman's famous monastery of Bangor, where he was so high in general esteem that he became the abbot, or, according to other authorities, the prior of the community. In A.D. 671, having attained his twenty-ninth year, he left his native country and repaired to Scotland. Two years were spent in choosing a place of abode, and finally in A.D. 673 he settled down at Apurcrossan, or Applecross. The spot did credit to his taste in scenery. Few places, it has been remarked, even in Western Scotland, excel Applecross in the abundance and variety of objects, both beautiful and grand, scattered around. Here he founded a church, which became the nucleus of a conventual establishment, on the model of Bangor, and for a long space of time affiliated to that monastery. Here, too, he presided over the community he had founded, upwards of fifty-one years, and having lived in the midst of his own people to the age of eighty, died on Tuesday, the 21st of April, A.D. 722.

The discovery of these particulars respecting this eminent disciple of Columba, has materially altered

the traditions of a large group of churches and cells. Twenty-one different spots, scattered over the West and North of Scotland, have, with more or less certainty, been assigned to the memory of Maelrubha.[1]

(iv.) We will now pass on to a brief notice of Adamnán, the biographer of Columba, the ninth abbot of the house which he founded. He was, like all Celtic ecclesiastical dignitaries, of royal descent, and was born in the barony of Tirhugh, in the south-west of the county of Donegal.

A single anecdote in the life of Finnachta, a chief of the Southern Hy Neill, relates to his early history, and although Dr. Reeve has called in question some of the details, it shall here find a place. "Finnachta one day came, with a numerous cavalcade, to the house of his sister, whither he was invited to be her guest. As they were riding along the way they met Adamnan, then a schoolboy, who was travelling upon the same road with a jar of milk upon his back, and as he fled from the way before the cavalcade, he knocked his foot against a stone and stumbled, and the jar fell from his back and was broken. Upon which Finnachta said, "Thou shalt receive protection, O student, from me," and he prayed him not to be sorrowful. Then said Adamnan, "O good man, I have cause for

[1] Dr. Reeve's Paper in the 'Proceedings Antiq. Scot.,' iii. 264.

grief, for there are three goodly students in one house, and three more of us are attendants upon them. And how we act is thus:—One attendant from among us goes out in turn to collect sustenance for the other five; and it was my turn to-day, but what I had gathered for them has been spilt upon the ground, and, what grieves me more, the borrowed jar is broken, and I have not wherewith to pay for it."

The story may be taken as an illustration of the severity of the discipline in some of these monastic communities, requiring even of one nobly born, that he should derive his sustenance from the charity of others. From Ireland he passed to Hy, and was admitted into the brotherhood under Seghine, the fifth abbot. Here he acquired a reputation for learning, and became acquainted with Latin and other languages. In A.D. 679, when he had reached the age of fifty-five years, he was elected to the abbacy of Hy, and became the friend of Aldfrid, the Northumbrian prince, who was then an exile in Ireland.

In A.D. 685 took place "the war of Ecgfrid," or the expedition against the Picts, which restored Aldfrid to his country and the enjoyment of his hereditary rights. The following year saw Adamnan at the Northumbrian court, while he undertook a mission to recover a number of Irish captives, whom Ecgfrid's general had carried away. In his journey he was

successful, and he brought back all the captives. Two years afterwards he undertook a second journey to Northumbria, at a time when the country was ravaged by a terrible pestilence, from which, however, he escaped. These journeys enlarged his mind, by bringing him into contact with other civilization besides those he was acquainted with, and which were now struggling into existence. He was of an inquisitive and discursive turn of mind, as is proved by the following incident. Having fallen in with a French bishop, named Arculfus, who had visited the Holy Places in Palestine, and had visited Damascus, Constantinople, Alexandria, and many islands of the sea, and had been thrown by a storm on the northern shore of Britain, he took from his mouth and wrote down a description of them, which many years afterwards was found and published as the earliest account, coming from modern Christian Europe, of the condition of Eastern lands and the cradle of Christianity.[1]

His second visit to Northumbria lasted some little time, and during it he visited various churches of the Angles, and, amongst others, Jarrow, where the abbot, Ceolfrid, held a discussion with him respecting Easter and the tonsure, and the result was that Adamnan was won over from the Celtic to the

[1] SeeBede, 'H.E.' v. 15; Burton's 'History of Scotland,' i. 256; Dr. Reeve, 'Adamnan,' clii.

Catholic usage, and earnestly advocated its adoption. It was probably about this time that he presented to Aldfrid the book 'De Locis Sanctis,' which has just been alluded to.

Returning to Hy, he endeavoured to win over the brethren to the adoption of his views on the two great questions which then divided the Celtic Churches, but without immediate success. In A.D. 692 he again visited Ireland, and endeavoured to bring the Irish into conformity with the English Church. How long he remained is not certain, but on the occasion of another visit, in A.D. 697, he was instrumental in convening a synod of ecclesiastics and chieftains at Birr, near the middle of Ireland, where an enactment, singularly illustrating the manners of the times, was passed, exempting women from going to battle.

After this he would seem to have remained some years in Ireland, urging the adoption of the Catholic Easter and tonsure, and promoting his social reforms. He was certainly there in A.D. 701, and convened in that year a synod at Tara, to condemn Irgalach, son of Conang, and lord of Cianachta, in Meath, who had slain his own cousin Niall. Niall had been under the protection of Adamnan, and he now denounced the outrage in the severest terms.

Bede tells us that he celebrated his last Easter in

Ireland, and returning to Hy, earnestly advocated in his own monastery the Catholic observance of that sacred festival, yet without being able to prevail: "For it came to pass that before the next year came round he departed this life; the Divine goodness so ordering it, that, as he was a man most earnest for peace and unity, he should be taken away to everlasting life before the return of the season of Easter, he should be obliged to differ still more seriously from those who were unwilling to follow him in the way of truth."[1] He died in the year A.D. 706, at the age of seventy-seven.

Bede bears honourable testimony to his character, describing him as a "good and wise man, and well versed in the knowledge of the Scriptures," and Alcuin classes him among the "illustrious fathers of the Scots."

His undisputed writings are (i.) his work 'Concerning Holy Places,' of which Bede has transferred large portions of two chapters into the body of his history;[2] and (ii.) his 'Life of Columba,' in three books, which was compiled by him between the years A.D. 692 and 697, and the materials of which were derived from earlier records and from the traditions of the monastery of Hy. "The Latinity of the work is not

[1] Bede, 'H. E.,' v. 15. [2] Ib. v. 16, 17.

so flowing or free from Celticisms as the former one, but it is a much more precious relic of antiquity, and is one of the most important pieces of hagiology in existence."[1]

[1] See Dr. Reeve's 'Introduction to Adamnan's Life of Columba,' and his article in Smith's 'Dictionary of Christian Biography,' i. 41, 43.

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

IT is now time to gather together the salient points which mark the history of the conversion of the Celts.

(i.) And first, we cannot fail to be struck with the fact that the Celtic missions addressed themselves, in the first instance, to the kings and chieftains.

This was not so in the first age of the Church. Then her conversions were individual rather than national. The new faith made its way from below rather than from above. The early Church worked her way, in the literal sense of the word, "*underground*, under camp and palace, under senate and forum."[1]

But turn where we will in these Celtic missions, we notice how different were the features that marked them now.

In Dalaradia St. Patrick obtains the site of his earliest church from the chieftain of the country, Dichu. At Tara, he obtains from King Laoghaire a reluc-

[1] Dean Stanley's 'Introd. Lecture on Eccles. History,' p. xxxviii.

tant toleration of his ministry. In Connaught he addresses himself first to the chieftains of Tirawley, and in Munster baptizes Angus, the king, at Cashel, the seat of the kings. What he did in Ireland reproduces itself in the Celtic missions of Wales and Scotland, and we cannot but take note of the important influence of Welsh and Pictish chiefs.

The policy thus pursued was dictated as much by the wants of the case as by a knowledge of the character and habits of the people. "The chieftain," it has been observed, "once secured, the clan, as a matter of course, were disposed to follow in his steps. To attempt the conversion of the clan, in opposition to the will of the chieftain, would probably have been to rush upon inevitable death, or, at the least, to risk a violent expulsion from the district. The people may not have adopted the actual profession of Christianity, which was all perhaps that in the first instance they adopted, from any clear or intelligent appreciation of its superiority to their former religion. But to obtain from the people even an actual profession of Christianity was an important step to ultimate success. It secured toleration at least for Christian institutions. It enabled the missionaries to plant in every tribe their churches, schools, and monasteries, and to establish among the half

pagan inhabitants of the country societies of holy men, whose devotion, usefulness, and piety soon produced an effect on the most barbarous and savage hearts."[1]

(ii.) But we shall be making a mistake if we suppose the results achieved were attained without danger and loss. No sound missionary work has ever been done without costing its price.

The life of the "Apostle of Ireland" was often attempted, and always was exposed to considerable peril. On one occasion we are told that one of his attendants was slain in mistake for himself. The locality of the Druids was specially marked, and during his labours in Connaught he was under the necessity of providing himself with an escort. We have seen the perils to which the mission work in Wales was exposed, and cannot here fail to have noticed how St. Columba again and again held his life in his hand when he confronted powerful Pictish chiefs.

It is plain also that, great as may have been the success of St. Patrick in some parts of Ireland, there were many tribes and districts which rejected his teaching altogether. It was a sense of the danger to which they were exposed that induced him to surround his ecclesiastical buildings with fortifications,

[1] Todd's 'S. Patrick,' p. 499.

and to found several on situations adapted by nature for defensive purposes, or close to the dwellings of chiefs which had been already strongly fortified.

(iii.) It was also in some measure for the sake of security against lawless violence, that the spirit of the clan was enlisted by these Celtic pioneers into the service of religion.

The condition of society rendered it impossible to maintain the Christian life at all, except by uniting the members of the Church by the bonds of some monastic rule.

In the Celtic septs and clans the will of the chieftain was law. At the call of his chief the Celt left wife and children to render aid in any quarrel or feud, however little it might be connected with his own interests, and not only to leave home for him, but to fight and die in his behalf.

It is obvious, therefore, how important an auxiliary the spirit of clanship could be made in the service of the Church.

It transferred itself readily to the monastic society. "The abbot was sometimes also the chieftain, or a near relative of the chieftain, and the welfare or progress of the monastic society was identified with the prosperity of the clan."[1]

[1] Todd's 'S. Patrick,' pp. 505, 506.

As we have seen again and again, a royal fort or a portion of land would be bestowed upon a Cadoc or a Columba by the head of a tribe, and in many instances it would be presented by the head of some tribe to which they themselves belonged. In the latter case the abbacy remained with the family of the founder, and they were expected to provide, from among the members of it, a person duly qualified to fulfil the functions of abbot. "In fact, the rule was, on each avoidance of the abbacy, to fill up the situation from founder's kin, and failing a qualified person in the direct line, to choose a successor from a collateral branch. When, however, the saint who founded the monastery belonged to a different tribe from that of the chief from whom the grant was obtained and in whose tribe it was founded, the succession to the abbacy was often retained by the family to whom the saint belonged, from the members of which the abbot was in the same manner supplied."[1]

Hence, just as within the tribe, there had been the reciprocal rights which the chief could exact from the members of the tribe, and they from him, so was it within the monastic society.

[1] See Dr. Reeve's paper on this subject, quoted in Skene's 'Celtic Scotland,' ii. 68.

The Church could claim from the tribe tithes, or first-fruits and firstlings; the tribe could demand of the Church baptism and communion, and the celebration of the divine offices. "It is difficult for us," it has been well said, "to realize to ourselves what the pagan life which these early Celtic missionaries confronted really was—its hopeless corruption, its utter disregard of the sanctity of domestic ties, its injustice and selfishness, its violent and bloody character; and these characteristics could not be diminished in a people who had been partially Christianized and had fallen back from it into heathenism. The monastic missionaries did not commence their work as the earlier secular Church would have done, by arguing against their idolatry, superstition, and immorality, and preaching a purer faith; but they opposed to it the antagonistic characteristics and purer life of Christianity.

"They asked and obtained a settlement in some small and valueless island. There they settled down as a little Christian colony, living under a monastic rule requiring the abandonment of all that was attractive in life. They exhibited a life of purity, holiness, and self-denial. They exercised charity and benevolence, and they forced the respect of the surrounding pagans for a life the motives of which they could not comprehend, unless they resulted from

principles higher than those this pagan religion afforded them; and having won their respect for their lives, and their gratitude for their benevolence, these monastic missionaries went among them with the Word of God in their hands, and preached to them the doctrines and pure morality of the Word of Life."[1]

It is no wonder, then, that princes and chiefs, attracted to the strangers who came amongst them by the purity of their lives, and finding the spirit of the clan as strong amongst them as amongst themselves, threw in their lot with them, and that thus the spirit of clanship was engrafted upon the institutions of the Church and promoted at once union, protection, and security.

(iv.) The fact that the abbot was often the chieftain of the tribe goes far to explain another feature in the early Irish and Scotch monasteries. We find bishops from time to time subject to monastic rule, and under the jurisdiction of the abbot, even though he might be only a priest.

Now it would be a mistake to suppose for a moment that the distinction between the orders of priest and bishop were not thoroughly understood and carefully preserved in these primitive communities. The peculiar functions of each order were never overlooked,

[1] Skene's 'Celtic Scotland,' ii. 74.

nor did the priest ever intrude upon the office of the bishop. "The bishops were always applied to to consecrate churches, to ordain to the ecclesiastical degree or Holy Orders, including the consecration of the bishop; to give confirmation and the more solemn benedictions, and to administer the Holy Communion with peculiar rites of greater pomp and ceremony."

Hence, though bishops were attached to the Columbian monasteries, and were subject to the superior of these religious houses, even though he might be no more than a priest, or even a layman; yet no abbot ever ventured to exercise any of his episcopal functions. His jurisdiction extended simply to his position as one of the monastic "family." A distinguished ecclesiastic might be advanced to the Order of the Episcopacy in recognition of his pre-eminence in sanctity or learning.[1] He might, nevertheless, continue to live as one of the "society," and would be called in to ordain, or perform some other peculiarly episcopal function, when occasion required, being looked upon as essential to the *propagation* rather than the maintenance of the Church. And in cases where the abbot was also chief of the clan, his juris-

[1] See article Bishop, in Smith's 'Dict. of Christian Antiquities.'

diction, as one in episcopal orders, would lead to no possible misunderstanding.

(v.) Powerful, however, as the spirit of clanship would tend to make the monastic "families," and great as their influence was, radiating from the devotion of their members, they probably acquired still greater influence from the extent to which they devoted their time, their energies, their whole attention to the instruction of the young.

They had hardly, indeed, been established before they became great educational seminaries, to which the youth of the tribes were sent, some to be trained to the monastic life, some to receive a secular education. Besides the community of monks, each monastery had, as we have seen,[1] a body of "alumni," or pupils, under instruction. This applies equally to the monasteries of Ireland, the religious establishments of St. David and St. Cadoc, and the numerous offshoots from Iona.

Even in the smaller monasteries the number of such pupils under instruction was upwards of fifty, while in the larger establishments it reckoned its hundreds. There a single question was sufficient to win over the mass of a whole tribe to adherence to the Church; and the schools of Ireland and Iona became

[1] See above, p. 124.

so celebrated, that students flocked to them from all quarters; and in the seventh and eighth centuries, when intercourse was once more restored between them and the Continent of Europe, they occupied at once the very highest place.

Thus Bede tells us that when, in 664, a plague depopulated the kingdom of Northumbria and the Irish coasts, "many of the nobility and of the middle ranks of the English nation were in the latter country, who, in the days of the bishops Ninan and Colman, forsaking their native island, had retired thither, either for the sake of divine studies, or of a more continent life; and some of them presently devoted themselves faithfully to a monastic life, others chose rather to apply themselves to study, going about from one master's cell to another. The Scots most willingly received them all, and took care to supply them gratuitously with daily food, as also to furnish them with books to read, and their teaching, without making any charge."[1]

Of Columba, his biographer tells us that he "never would spend even one hour without study, or prayer, or writing, or some other holy occupation." We find him transcribing the Psalter, composing a book of hymns for the office of every day in the week, and at

[1] Bede, 'H. E.,' iii. 27.

the same time cultivating his own language and writing "thrice fifty noble lays,"

"Some in Latin, which were beguiling,
Some in Gaelic, fair the tale."[1]

(vi.) This diligent attention to the education of the young naturally went a great way towards not merely attaching the clan to the Church, but promoting the growth of a native clergy.

This was deemed a point of the greatest importance by the early Celtic missionaries. There was no need for them to address their hearers through the frigid mediation of an interpreter. With the persuasive eloquence of their own tongue they could announce to their Celtic converts the message of the Cross; and what they did themselves they were anxious that their successors should do after them. Like Ulphilas, Cyril, and Methodius, and other missionaries of the early Eastern Church, they were convinced that one of the most important requisites

[1] The remains of the literature of this period include—(*a*) 'The Confession,' and 'The Letter to Coroticus' of S. Patrick; (*b*) 'The Monastic Rule,' Six Letters, Seventeen Instructions or Sermons, and one or two poetical pieces of Columbanus, all written in Latin, and evincing a thorough acquaintance with the Holy Scripture and the history and literature of the Church; (*c*) Cummian's letter concerning the Easter Festival; (*d*) Two Latin Lives of Columba, by Abbots of Iona; (*e*) Adamnan's 'Tract on the Holy Places,' all which give proof of classical attainments as well as acquaintance with ecclesiastical writings.

for permanent success was their ability to impart instruction in the vernacular language of the people.

The apostles of Ireland and Caledonia appear, in a large majority of instances, to have endeavoured to place natives of the country as priests and bishops over the societies which they founded.

At first sight this may appear to have been almost impossible. We find it difficult to understand how a lawless chieftain, baptized probably in adult life, could be at once converted into a devoted bishop or an efficient priest.[1] But the collegiate bodies established, wherever Christianity found a footing, became schools for the education of a native clergy. "The daily offices of devotion trained the inmates to the correct observance of the ritual of the Church, and prepared them to become the heads, or priests or bishops of similar establishments."

On several occasions it is recorded that St. Patrick taught to such of his converts as were intended for holy orders, the alphabet.[2] Thus when he was somewhere near the river Erne, and had baptized a man, together with an infant son, we are told that he wrote for him, that is, for the father, an *abgitorium*,

[1] Todd's 'S. Patrick,' p. 506.

[2] Or the *Abgitorium*. This word is a corruption of Abecedorium, in Irish *Aibgitir*, or more correctly *Abcitir*, the ABC, or alphabet.—Du Cange, in vv. *Abgatorium* and *Abctorium*. Todd's 'S. Patrick,' p. 507, *n*.

and blessed him with the blessing of a bishop. Again, he was seen by the heathen inhabitants of a certain district with eight or nine companions having *tablets* in their hands. These long and narrow tablets were mistaken by the uninstructed natives for swords, and they exclaimed that, though seemingly of wood, they were really of iron, and were intended to shed blood. But their violence was calmed by a wiser counsellor, who submitted to baptism, together with his son. For the son, whose name he changed to Sachels, or Sacallus, the saint wrote a copy of the Psalter, which the writer who records the legend, declares he had seen with his own eyes.

Whether the art of writing was known in any shape to the Pagan population of Ireland prior to the introduction of Christianity, is a very ideal and difficult question. The Druids of the Gauls, in Cæsar's time, are represented as being in possession of written characters,[1] and they would communicate a knowledge of the older alphabet only to the initiated. We may conclude that the "Apostle of Ireland" introduced what was then the alphabet of the rest of Europe, and taught it without reserve to those whom he designed for holy orders, and encouraged them to make it known to others. In this alphabet he taught

[1] Cæsar, 'B.G.,' ii. 14.

them to transcribe portions of Holy Scripture, and to copy Missals and other sacred books. Thus he brought it to pass that the art of writing ceased to be an occult field of learning confined to a particular clan. It became known with the Roman alphabet to his Christian converts, and the alphabet which had been before that time peculiar to the Druids, and was probably of Greek origin, became extinct.

(vii.) Two questions, as we have seen, did much to separate the Celtic Churches from those of the Roman communion. The first of these was the Easter question, the second the tonsure.

It is a common mistake to suppose that the difference about Easter was a revival of the old dispute between the Churches of Asia Minor, and especially of Ephesus, and the rest of Christendom, and it is a "mistake reared upon a mistake" to adduce this as a proof that Celtic Christianity came from the East. The Churches of Asia Minor which followed, or professed to follow the tradition of St. John, commemorated our Lord's death, on the 14th of Nisan, as being the very day of the Saviour's Cross and Passion, so that the Easter festival might fall upon any day in the week. But nothing of this kind could possibly have happened in the Celtic Churches. Their basis of calculation for Easter simply followed the cycle

employed by the Western Church, and specially by the Church of Rome, up to the beginning of the fifth century. But while the other Churches of the West, and of Rome at their head, not being cut off by an impassable barrier from the superior knowledge of Alexandria, had from time to time learnt to make allowances for certain disturbing facts, and had adjusted their calendar to these, the Celtic Easter cycle had remained stationary. Their cycle was, though really of an earlier date, that called by the name of Sulpicius Severus, a disciple of St. Martin of Tours, and had been adopted by the Western Churches till they availed themselves of the more correct cycle of Victorius Aquitanus. Separated for long years from the science of the Christian world, the Celtic Churches had failed to make those corrections in the calendar which were necessary, if Easter was to be duly observed. They agreed neither with the quarto-deciman view of the earlier Asiatics of Asia Minor, nor with the Alexandrine rule, which governed the Eastern Church in general after the Council of Nice.

The Celtic mode of tonsure again, which is the second point, leads to the same conclusion. The Greek tonsure, styled *St. Paul's*, was total; the Roman, styled *St. Peter's*, was coronal. The Celtic tonsure, on the other hand, was from ear to ear, that is, the anterior

half of the head was made bare, but the middle part was untouched. Thus it was as different from the Eastern as it was from the Roman tonsure, and clearly grew up among the Celtic Christians without any copying of other Churches, Eastern or Western. [1]

(viii.) As regards the buildings erected by these early pioneers of Christian civilization, we have already seen how humble they were, and how completely in keeping with the day of "small things," of which they were the outward sign.

None, indeed, of the ruins which now attract the visitor to Iona can be traced back to the times of Columba himself. But we are not left without evidence of their peculiar structure. In the majority of cases the churches and houses alike of the monks were constructed of wattles, nor for a considerable period afterwards did the use of this material argue poverty or sordidness. "A wall-plate was made of uprights, with twigs interlaced between them in the usual method of basket-weaving. A second fabric of the same kind was placed within the other at a short distance, and the space between was filled with turf or clay, forming a pretty solid wall." [2] The church at Iona, as well as the hospitium, the refectory, the

[1] Haddan's 'Remains,' p. 239; Reeve's 'Adamnan,' p. cxiv.
[2] Burton's 'History of Scotland,' i. 249.

kitchen, and the cluster of huts which formed the cells of the brotherhood, were thus made of wattles, and surrounded by a dyke, like the fortresses of the period, which were erected on a similar system.

There is evidence, however, that ecclesiastical buildings in stone were raised in Ireland even as early as the Columbian times. The relics of the early modes of building in stone are of three classes,—the cells and other domestic buildings of the monks, the oratories and churches, and the round towers. "The former class are of the rudest and most ascetic description, and seem to be founded on the customary dwellings of the pagan inhabitants. The monks evidently eschewed all pretensions to personal comfort, and took up at once with the scale of dwelling common among their flocks. They lived in stone huts without mortar and vaulted over; more like ovens than human habitations, and so small as only to be sufficient for one person. The cells of the monks differed but little from this, excepting in being quadrangular within, though round or oval without. The earlier oratories seem frequently to have been a development of the construction of these cells, built of uncemented stones admirably fitted to each other, and their lateral walls converging from the base to their apex in curved lines. The early Irish

churches are of two very simple types, being either oblong, with a door at the west, and a window at the east end,—a mere development, with upright walls, of the oratories just described; or a double oblong, forming a nave and chancel, and united by a chancel arch, the distinct prototypes of the simplest forms of an English church. The one doorway is always west and one of the windows to the east, though side-windows are also introduced, all apparently without glass. In the smaller churches the roofs were frequently formed of stone, but in the larger ones were always of wood."[1]

One of the most unique specimens in the diocese of St. Asaph of these primitive oratories is that of Trillo in Rhôs. It is situated on the shore, to the north end of Llandrillo Church. In form it is a parallelogram, about fifteen feet long by eight wide, the east end and both sides being pierced with small loopholes or lancets. The roof is vaulted, and consists of small stones. The entrance is at the west end, and at the entrance is a perennial spring.

Another example of such an oratory in Cornwall is that of St. Piran at Perranzabuloe. In plan it is a simple parallelogram. The height is

[1] Sir S. Gilbert Scott's 'Royal Academy Lectures' for 1868; compare Burton's 'Hist. of Scotland,' i. 248.

nineteen or twenty feet to the apex of the gable, the side walls about thirteen feet and a half. About one-third of the length the eastern portion is separated by a low stone step. This is the boundary of the chancel.[1] Within this is a stone altar, and a stone bench runs along the base of the wall on the inside, and the floor is sunk two or three steps lower than the ground without the edifice. There is always a wall running round these structures alike in Cornwall, Wales, and Ireland.

Few things are more striking in the topography of Wales than the number of places beginning with the word *Llan*, an "enclosure."[2] Three-fourths of the names of the parishes of Wales and the Marches begin with this word, which has come to signify a church and its churchyard. In ancient times, however, the word meant an enclosure for any purpose, as *ber-llan*, an "orchard," *corph-llan*, a "sheep-fold." But the well-known practice of the early

[1] See the Transactions of the Exeter Diocesan Association.

[2] The original meaning of *Llan* was probably not an enclosure but a level plain, such as the *Landes*, the vast sandy flats near Bayonne, or the *Llanos*, the sea-like plains of South America. In a mountainous country like Wales such level spots would be the first to be enclosed, and it is easy to perceive the process by which the transition of many might be effected.—Isaac Taylor's 'Words and Places,' ed. 1, pp. 241, 242.

Celtic missionaries, in transferring heathen temples, festivals, and sacred wells[1] to the purposes of the new religion, helps us to see how the meaning of the word became restricted. The sacred enclosures of Celtic heathendom, when supplanted by the Christian church, retained the same name, while the word *Eglwys* (from the Greek ἐκκλησία) marks a church

[1] It is in connection with "Wells" that the earliest customs of all have been handed down, for we have here traces of many heathenish and pre-Christian rites that have survived, it may be said, to our day the endless vicissitude of civil and ecclesiastical change. The earliest Celtic inhabitants of the island brought over with them the patriarchal habits of a country and a climate in which "wells of water" were esteemed among the most valuable of possessions; and retained the customs of their fatherland under the altered aspects of their new home, just as our own friends still keep our Christmas in Australia and New Zealand. It was around these that the elders met to discuss the fortunes of their race, or to gossip about the news of the day. It was here the young men engaged with friendly rivalry in their national Olympics. It was here that old and young assembled periodically to "drink sugar and water," or join in some other emblematic act in token of a common bond. It was here, too, that the Christian missionary often met the assembled multitudes, and preached to them the Word of Life. Here their first converts were baptized; and hence, after a church had been built, the water for Holy Baptism long continued to be taken; and when the parishioners wished to "walk their bounds" on the Rogation days, it was at these that for many generations they first met for a special service; thus, in theory at least, hallowing by religion their union of the present with the past."—Thomas's 'History of the Diocese of St. Asaph.'

founded in later times, on a site *not* sacred to heathenism.[1] "It occurs ninety-seven times in the village names of Wales, thirteen times in those of Cornwall, seven times in Shropshire and in Herefordshire, four times in Gloucestershire. It is also found in the Cymric portion of Scotland, and is very common in Brittany."[2] The nationality of the Briton comes out strongly in the names appended to the word *llan*. With a few Scriptural exceptions, such as Llan-stephen and Llan-silo, the churches of St. Stephen and St. Silas, the dedication of churches in Wales is mostly to British saints. Frequently as the name Llan-ddewi occurs, we forget to connect it, as "the church of St. David," with the affectionate remembrance in which the British race for long ages held one of their greatest missionaries. The word Llan-dy-faelog, the "church house of Malewg,"[3] taken with the occurence of *dy*, the inflected form of the word *ty*, as a prefix to the names of Fodwg, Fryddwg, Gai, Gwen, Silio, Conwy, Nam, and Sul, seems to point to a fact which is still traceable in the structure of some of the ancient churches of Ireland and Wales. In these cases a part of the church was fitted

[1] Edmunds' 'Traces of History in Names of Places,' p. 42.
[2] Isaac Taylor, p. 241.
[3] Comp. Lan-ty-Hydrock, Lan-ty-Dilpa, in Cornwall.

up as a house for the clergy who ministered within its walls; and the same practice seems to have continued down far into mediæval times."[1]

In Scotland and Ireland the Cymric *llan* is replaced by the analogous Gadhelic word *kil*. At first it denoted only a hermit's "cell." Afterwards it was used to denote the church of which the hermit's cell was so often the germ. In Ireland alone there are 1,400 local names which contain this root, and there are many in Scotland also. The prefix *kil* supplants that of *llan* in a few places even in Wales and the neighbouring counties, and in all probability recalls the names of Irish missionaries who, in the fifth and sixth centuries, resorted in great numbers to the shores of Wales.

The Norse name for these Celtic hermits, to whom the fierce Scandinavians who settled in the island off the Scottish coast owed their knowledge of Christianity, was *Papar*. "Three islets among the Hebrides, two in the Orkneys, two in the Shetlands, and others among the Faroes and off the coast of Iceland, bear the names of *Pabba*, or *Papa*, 'the Father's Isle.' On the mainland of Orkney, and again in South Ronaldsay, we find places called *Paplay*, the 'hermit's cell,' and at *Enhallow*, and at

[1] Edmunds' 'Names of Places,' p. 44.

one of the *Papas* in the Orkneys, the ancient cell still remains. Dysart, on the coast of Fife, marks the wilderness—*desertum*—where St. Serf scooped out of the rocks a cave for his abode."[1]

Thus do these names speak to us across the centuries and remind us of the self-denying labours of devoted men who have long passed away, but who did what they could in their day and their generation. Many of them are to us mere shadows, but amidst the obscuring elements of fable and legend we may trace in them the outlines of good and useful men, who made it their business, in a rude and barbarous age, to spread the gentler influences of Christianity.

In dealing with the Celtic tribes, the apostles of Cornwall, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland, and their disciples after them, wisely made themselves on many occasions "all things to all men"; though, whenever real necessity arose, they did not scruple to overturn the objects of Celtic idolatry, and to protest against superstitious usages, they were guilty of no offensive or vulgar iconoclasm. Not representing the manners and civilization of a foreign race, but themselves in many instances the descendants of ancient native chiefs and princes, they dealt tenderly with the usages of a people, with whose feelings and preju-

[1] Isaac Taylor, pp. 356, 357.

dices they could sympathize. They enlisted the spirit of the clan in the service of Christianity; they raised up gradually a native clergy; they made their institutions self-supporting; and we shall trace the results of the good seed now sown in the wonderful succession of zealous missionaries, the glory of the Irish and Scottish Churches, who went forth in the sixth and seventh centuries to inaugurate the evangelization of Central Europe.

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